

GAME PREVIEW  
Miami Hurricanes

WOMEN'S GOLF  
Sarah Pravecek

NU VOLLEYBALL  
Kelsey Fien

THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

# HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



## ELECTRIC EFFORT

Freshman punt returner sparks Huskers to large victory at Fresno State



Sept. 20, 2014  
VOLUME 34 | NO. 8 |  
\$4.95

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# HUSKERS

ILLUSTRATED

Huskers Illustrated is published by Landmark Community Newspapers, 2623 Regency Rd., Lexington, KY 40503. Periodicals postage paid at Lexington, KY and additional mailing offices.

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**Huskers Illustrated (USPS 658-450, ISSN 0279-3474)** is published monthly January, February, March and December, Bi-monthly March/April and June/July/August and three times per month during October and weekly in September and November by Landmark Publications, LLC dba Huskers Illustrated, 601 Taylorsville Rd Shelbyville, KY 40065. Periodicals Postage Paid at Shelbyville, KY and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions: \$62.95 per year. Postmaster: Send address changes to Huskers Illustrated, 601 Taylorsville Rd. Shelbyville, KY 40065.

## ADVERTISING

Tim Francis (800) 524-9527 Ext. 111  
or Darren Ivy (402) 762-5352

NATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR: G Associates, Inc.

**SUBSCRIPTION QUESTIONS:** Go to magazine.huskersillustrated.com or e-mail to support@huskersillustrated.com or call 1-800-524-9527.

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The next Huskers Illustrated edition, recapping the Miami game and previewing the Illinois game, will mail on Monday, Sept. 22.

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BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

Nebraska freshman De'Mornay Pierson-El single-handedly has made NU's punt return unit one to fear after years of futility.

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### TWO-MINUTE DRILL

BY LANNY HOLSTEIN & DARREN IVY

NU punter Sam Foltz has used visualization techniques to turn himself into one of top punters in the conference.

2014 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME	TV/SCORE
AUG. 30	FLORIDA ATLANTIC	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	W, 55-7
SEPT. 6	MCNEESE STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11:00 A.M.	W, 31-24
SEPT. 13	@FRESNO STATE	FRESNO, CALIF.	9:30 P.M.	W, 55-19
SEPT. 20	MIAMI	MEMORIAL STADIUM	7:00 P.M.	ESPN2
SEPT. 27	ILLINOIS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	8:00 P.M.	BTN
OCT. 4	@MICHIGAN STATE	EAST LANSING, MICH.	7:00 P.M.	ESPN/ABC
OCT. 18	@NORTHWESTERN	EVANSTON, ILL.	6:30 P.M.	BTN
OCT. 25	RUTGERS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBD
NOV. 1	PURDUE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBD
NOV. 15	@WISCONSIN	MADISON, WIS.	TBA	TBD
NOV. 22	MINNESOTA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBD
NOV. 28	@IOWA	IOWA CITY, IA	TBA	TBD
DEC. 6	@BIG TEN TITLE GAME	INDIANAPOLIS, IND.	7 P.M.	FOX

ALL GAMES ARE CST



### ON THE COVER

Freshman De'Mornay Pierson-El provided an electric effort on Saturday night by returning one punt 86 yards for a touchdown and another punt 51 yards. His 150 yards of punt returns against Fresno State surpassed NU's punt return yardage from all of last season.

PHOTO BY TONY KIEHN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

## STAGE SET FOR NU TO TAKE NEXT STEP UNDER PELINI WITH MIAMI MATCHUP

WITH A 3-0 START, NEBRASKA HAS MADE IT UNBEATEN FURTHER THAN EACH OF THE LAST TWO SEASONS AND HAS A HUGE OPPORTUNITY SATURDAY NIGHT TO REGAIN SOME NATIONAL CREDIBILITY FOR NOT ONLY THE BIG RED PROGRAM BUT ALSO THE CONFERENCE AS A WHOLE WHEN IT HOSTS MIAMI IN A NATIONALLY TELEVISED GAME ON ESPN2.

Miami (2-1) is not the same Hurricane program it was when they defeated Nebraska in three different bowl games to win national titles, but it still is arguably the biggest name on Nebraska's schedule and certainly the biggest non-conference foe.

Being the first year of the new four-team playoff for a national champion, it likely is going to take an undefeated team from the much scrutinized Big Ten Conference to earn an invitation.

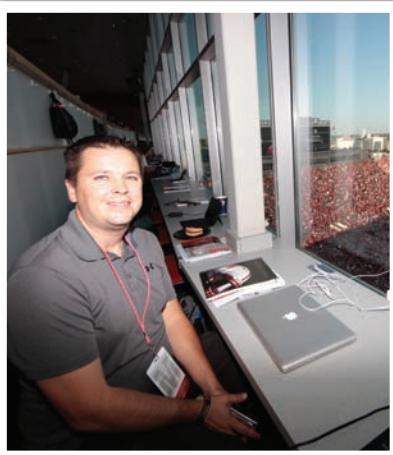
Through the third week of the season, only the Huskers and Penn State can still claim that status in the Big Ten Conference.

Nebraska has shown flashes of the championship teams of NU's past in dominating lesser opponents Florida Atlantic and Fresno State, but also struggled against FCS opponent McNeese State, which is a nationally-ranked FBS team who when it is all said and done will probably go pretty deep in its division's playoffs.

There is no arguing that the talent and number of playmakers on this year's roster is likely the highest it has been in Nebraska Head Coach Bo Pelini's seven years at the helm.

Twice in the first three weeks of the season, the Huskers have had the top play on ESPN SportsCenter, getting Nebraska's Jordan Westerkamp and Ameer Abdullah millions of eye balls across the country.

With Abdullah solidly in the Heisman Trophy race and not many other marque



matchups in the country this week, it is certain many will tune in their televisions Saturday night to see what all the hype is about in Nebraska.

A dominating performance against the Hurricanes and a 4-0 start would certainly raise the Huskers in the polls and make many people think twice about the Nebraska's chances at finally ending its four-loss-a-year streak under Pelini.

NU last won its first four games in 2011 in rising to a top-10 ranking when it was blown out by No. 7 Wisconsin 48-17 in the fifth game of that season. The Huskers started the 2010 season 5-0 and were No. 5 when they were upset by Texas 20-13 in the sixth game of that season.

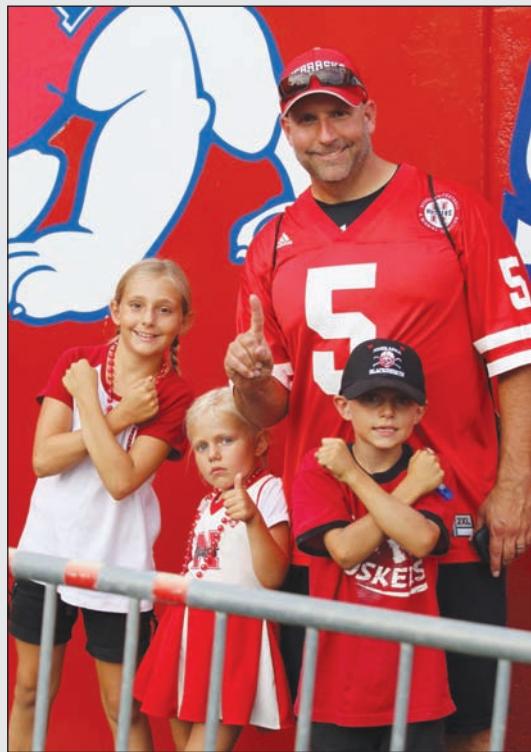
In Pelini's other four seasons, the Huskers' chances at an undefeated season were ended in the first four games - twice by Virginia Tech in 2008 and 2009 and twice by UCLA in 2012 and 2013.

If Saturday's 55-19 victory over Fresno State is any indication, Nebraska likely did just get caught overlooking McNeese State in a 31-24 win in week two.

The first quarter against Fresno State was as focused and inspired of an effort in all aspects of the game as the Huskers have demonstrated in many years. Several long-time Husker fans I have talked to also indicated a similar observation.

It now comes down to the Huskers needing to have consistent performances each week. If the first three weeks are any indication of future opponents, Nebraska certainly has a shot at running the table in conference play.

Miami is the last non-conference foe standing in the Huskers' way. Let's hope Nebraska can get over another Hurricane hurdle and head back down the track to national prominence again.



# Behind the N Breaking FSU's home streak

PHOTOS BY TONY KIEHN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Cousins, Grayson and Hunter Farnsworth of Las Vegas show their Husker support before the game. James Fox and his children, Ashlyn, Makena and Caden, of Discovery Bay, California are ready to see Randy & the Blackshirts "throw the bones" against the Bulldogs. Branden and Malery States of Ripon, California wait for freshman linebacker Chris Weber after the victory. Thomas Hedges of San Diego sports a cornhead and Husker flag before the Fresno State game. Luke Ostrander and his son Nolan soak up the atmosphere in the home of the Fresno State Bulldogs. A native of Hastings, Nebraska, Luke is in the US Air Force stationed in Vacaville, California. A fan at the game shows her love of the Blackshirts. Husker fans John Cunningham and his son Joey, have the chance to meet former Nebraska quarterback Vince Ferragamo between his musical set on the guitar in Fresno. Ferragamo and his band played at a tailgate before the game.

# Armstrong passes road test at Fresno

**Tommy Armstrong Jr. threw for three touchdowns, including a 70-yarder to Jordan Westerkamp on his first pass of the game.**



STORY BY TERRY DOUGLASS | PHOTO BY TONY KIEHN

**N**ebraska's Tommy Armstrong Jr. had a feeling the Cornhuskers would be successful in the passing game against Fresno State.

"We saw going into the game and preparing that sometimes (Fresno State) was bad on communication," Armstrong said. "If we got set and lined up quick, they couldn't get their calls in."

Armstrong's assessment proved to be spot-on. The sophomore quarterback completed his first pass attempt of the game for a 70-yard touchdown to wide receiver Jordan Westerkamp, helping Nebraska to a 55-19 road victory over the Bulldogs.

Facing a third-and-9 play from its own 30-yard line on its first possession, Nebraska called a timeout because the

coaching staff didn't like the pass protection it had called and the play clock was winding down.

Plus, head coach Bo Pelini said offensive coordinator Tim Beck saw something in Fresno State's defense the Huskers could exploit.

"We knew it was going to be hard for their safety to get over to where Jordan was," Armstrong said of Fresno State's defense prior to throwing his career-long 70-yard TD strike. "We caught them looking (over) to the sideline – I think it was one of their safeties – looking over, trying to communicate to one of their corners and Jordan ran right between both of them."

Armstrong was 12-of-21 passing for 260 yards with three TDs. Nebraska finished with 282 yards passing overall as backup quarterback Ryker Fyfe was 2-of-

3 for 22 yards and a score.

Due to Fresno State's blitz-heavy defensive scheme, Pelini said Nebraska probably could've thrown even more.

"(But) we didn't want to do that," Pelini said. "We wanted to run the ball and keep the clock going."

Nebraska finished with 562 yards of total offense, rushing for 280 yards on 42 attempts. Armstrong said Fresno State's respect for Huskers' I-back Ameer Abdullah helped set up the pass as wide receiver Kenny Bell led the way with five receptions for 84 yards.

"Of course, everybody's going to stack the box and try to make us pass with Ameer being Ameer and they didn't want him to get yards the way he's used to," Armstrong said. "Those guys out wide just have to make plays and I felt like, this game, they made plays."

# Nebraska defense holds up in Fresno heat

STORY BY TERRY DOUGLASS | PHOTO BY TONY KIEHN

**D**espite being on the field for 87 plays, including 59 pass attempts, Nebraska's defensive unit enjoyed a mostly steady performance during a 55-19 victory at Fresno State.

The Bulldogs gained 196 of their 346 total yards in the first half, but trailed 27-5 at the intermission. The Huskers led 34-5 before Fresno State quarterback Brian Burrell broke away for a 66-yard touchdown run with 4:42 remaining in the third quarter.

Fresno State rushed for just 105 yards and was 6-of-23 on third-down conversions. Nebraska's only defensive shortcoming was the inability to create a turnover.

"We did a lot of good things on pass

defense," Nebraska coach Bo Pelini said. "I mean, they just kept throwing it. There were some mistakes. There were some good things."

"I thought we contested the ball well. We gave them a variety of coverages."

Burrell finished 30-of-59 passing for 241 yards and a TD, but averaged just 4.1 yards per attempt. He was sacked four times. Fresno State's pass-happy approach came as no surprise to the Huskers

"They're a passing team," Nebraska cornerback Daniel Davie said. "They come out in '10 personnel' a lot, five-wide and throw a lot of (bubble screens). That was the game plan for the secondary to be backbone of the defense today. I think we stepped up to the challenge."

Freshman defensive back Joshua Kalu

led Nebraska with six tackles to go with a forced fumble and a pass breakup.

"I thought it was really good to give Josh Kalu the amount of snaps he got in dime," Pelini said. "That's going to be important for us as we move forward."

Defensive tackle Vincent Valentine had two sacks for Nebraska, while defensive end Greg McMullen and linebacker Marcus Newby each had one. Preseason All-America defensive end Randy Gregory returned after missing the McNeese State game on Sept. 5 with a knee injury and had three tackles, despite being bothered by a stomach ailment early on.

"He felt better as the game went on, which was a good sign," Pelini said of Gregory. "Trust me, he's a difference-maker, so having him out there is important."

Sophomore linebacker Josh Banderas tackles a Fresno State player.



# Huskers bounce Bulldogs in 55-19 win

## Long touchdowns on ground, through air, with return propel NU

STORY BY LANNY HOLSTEIN | PHOTO BY TONY KIEHN

**A**fter struggling with FCS McNeese State a week ago, the Huskers felt the pressure mounting to erase that memory against Fresno State.

This up-and-down Nebraska team did just that Saturday with a convincing 55-19 win over a hapless Fresno State team. The Huskers came out firing early, as quarterback Tommy Armstrong hit receiver Jordan Westerkamp over the middle for a 70-yard touchdown pass less than two minutes into the game.

"I knew they were blitzing (on that play) because they would threaten to blitz on certain downs and distances," Armstrong said. "I knew it was going to be hard for that safety to get over to where Jordan was."

Armstrong fired that touchdown pass on Nebraska's opening drive and he directed scoring marches on four of the Huskers next seven drives to break open a 27-5 halftime lead.

"That was important," Armstrong said. "It's always important to get a jump start on the game, accomplish what we accomplished and physically out play them and put some points on the board early."

That was especially the case this week, following the escape against McNeese State. Husker Nation was rattled, to put it kindly, after that game, and a statement like Nebraska made in the first half Saturday put the team and its fan base at ease.

"Guys had it in the back of their heads that they wanted to respond to that and come back playing well as a unit, offense and defense," Husker cornerback Daniel Davie said. "We definitely had a chip on our shoulders."

Everything went much smoother this week than last for the Big Red. The offense found enough lanes in the ground game for 284 yards rushing and Ryker Fyfe combined with Armstrong to throw for another 282.

Defensively, the Husker secondary got the stiffest test from Fresno State. Quarterback Brian Burrell slung it 59 times for 241 passing yards and a touchdown.

"That's what we expected coming into the game," Davie said. "They are a passing team in 10 personnel a lot, five wide, and they throw a lot of bubbles. That was the game



De'Mornay Pierson-El made an 86-yard punt return for a touchdown against Fresno State.

plan, for the secondary to be the backbone of the defense today. I think we stepped up to the challenge."

Special teams also stepped up for Bo Pelini's team. The coach challenged the third phase of the game to get better this week, and they did. Punter Sam Foltz was again his consistent self, averaging 47.4 yards per punt and landing two of his five inside the Bulldog 20, but the real star was return man De'Mornay Pierson-El.

The true freshman took a Fresno State punt 86 yards to the house in the second quarter and later added a 51-yard return.

"I was just watching my blocks being set up as the ball was in the air," he said. "I got a feel for what I was about to do, and knew that I would have to make one or two people miss. I hit the edge and bounced it back outside to where I had

an escort."

In the end, Nebraska outgained Fresno State 562 yards to 346 yards over four quarters. A Terrell Newby fumble deep in Nebraska territory set up a throw-away touchdown for the Bulldogs against the second-team defense or the score could have been even more lopsided.

Now the Huskers shift their focus to Miami, who comes into town as the marque home matchup of the season. It's important the team stays focused, according to Armstrong.

"Just keep the right mindset and practice the right way," the quarterback said. "We have to be able to watch the film and learn and take it onto the field. I feel like we did a great job of that this week, and we just have to do a great job of that again this coming week going into our game with Miami."

# GameStats

## SUMMARY

### SCORING

September 13, 2014  
Bulldog Stadium, Fresno, California  
Attendance: 41,031

	1	2	3	4	F
FRESNO STATE	2	3	7	7	19
NEBRASKA	14	13	14	14	55

<b>Q1</b>	13:14 NEB - Westerkamp, Jordan 70yd pass from Tommy Armstrong (Brown, Drew kick) 4:82 1:46	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
	12:03 NEB - Abdullah, Ameer 57yd run (Brown, Drew kick) 1:57 0:10	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>
	9:09 FS - Team Safety	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Q2</b>	12:18 NEB - Brown, Drew 38 yd field goal 10:59 4:47	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>
	9:11 NEB - Pierson-El, Demornay 86 yd punt return (Brown, Drew kick)	<b>2</b>	<b>24</b>
	5:40 NEB - Brown, Drew 22 yd field goal 5:22 2:00	<b>2</b>	<b>27</b>
	2:08 FS - Kroening, Kody 27 yd field goal 14:63 3:25	<b>5</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Q3</b>	11:50 NEB - Carter, Cethan 20 yd pass from Armstrong (Brown, Drew kick) 4:75 1:27	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>
	4:42 FS - Burrell, Brian 66 yd run (Kroening, Kody kick) 2:78 0:34	<b>12</b>	<b>34</b>
	2:47 NEB - Cross, Imani 62 yd run from Armstrong (Brown, Drew kick) 4:98 1:47	<b>12</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Q4</b>	10:48 NEB - Cotton, Sam 23 yd pass from Armstrong (Brown, Drew kick) 5:55 2:30	<b>12</b>	<b>48</b>
	6:25 FS - Hardaway, Delvo 9 yd pass from Brian Burrell (Kroening, Kody kick) 2:14 0:39	<b>19</b>	<b>48</b>
	3:04 NEB - Bailey, C. 10 yd pass from Ryker Fyfe (Brown, Drew kick) 7:44 3:20	<b>19</b>	<b>55</b>

## TEAM STATS

	NEBRASKA	FRESNO STATE
FIRST DOWNS	22	20
Rushing	7	5
Passing	13	13
Penalty	2	2
NET YARDS RUSHING	280	105
Rushing Attempts	42	28
Average Per Rush	6.7	3.8
Rushing Touchdowns	2	1
Yards Gained Rushing	284	143
Yards Lost Rushing	4	38
NET YARDS PASSING	282	241
Completions-Attempts-Int.	14-24-0	30-59-0
Average Per Attempt	11.8	4.1
Average Per Completion	20.1	8.0
Passing Touchdowns	4	1
TOTAL OFFENSE YARDS	562	346
Total offense plays	66	87
Average Gain Per Play	8.5	4.0
Fumbles: Number-Lost	4-1	1-0
Penalties: Number-Yards	6-61	5-55
PUNTS-YARDS	5-237	13-527
Average Yards Per Punt	47.4	40.5
Net Yards Per Punt	44.4	28.2
Inside 20	2	3
50+ Yards	3	2
Touchbacks	0	1
Fair catch	2	3
KICKOFFS-YARDS	11-704	3-182
Average Yards Per Kickoff	64.0	60.7
Net Yards Per Kickoff	40.4	48.0
Touchbacks	5	0
Punt returns: Number-Yards-TD	6-140-1	2-15-0
Average Per Return	23.3	7.5
Kickoff returns: Number-Yds-TD	3-38-0	6-135-0
Average Per Return	12.7	22.5
Interceptions: Number-Yds-TD	0-0-0	0-0-0
Fumble Returns: Number-Yds-TD	0-0-0	0-0-0
Possession Time	30:04	29:20
Third-Down Conversions	6 of 15	6 of 23
Fourth-Down Conversions	0 of 0	1 of 1
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	3-3	2-3
Touchdowns	2-3	1-3
Field goals	1-3	1-3
Sacks By: Number-Yards	4-29	0-0
PAT Kicks	7-7	2-2
Field Goals	2-3	1-2

## INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

### FRESNO STATE

RUSHING	NO	GAIN	LOST	NET	TD	LG	Avg
Burrell, Brian	9	88	29	59	1	66	6.6
Quezada, Josh	10	32	4	28	0	16	2.8
Waller, Marteze	7	22	3	19	0	8	2.7
Root, Dillon	1	1	0	1	0	1	1.0
Michenheimer, Ma.	1	0	2	-2	0	0	-2.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>3.8</b>

PASSING	C-A-I	YDS	TD	LONG	SACK
Burrell, Brian	30-59-0	241	1	29	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12-26-1</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1</b>

RECEIVING	NO	YARDS	TD	LONG
Harper, Josh	9	76	0	20
Hardaway, Delvo	4	52	1	21
Watson, Greg	4	45	0	21
Peck, Aaron	3	17	0	9
Williams, LeKen	3	5	0	9
Root, Dillon	2	38	0	29
Johnson, Justin	1	7	0	7
Michenheimer, Ma.	1	6	0	6
Quezada, Josh	1	-5	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>291</b>

PUNTS	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	IN20	TB
Swanson, Garret	12	495	41.2	65	2	1
<b>Burrell, Brian</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

RETURNS	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG	INTERCEPTIONS
Williams, LeKen	1	19	19	0	0	0	0
Root, Dillon	0	0	0	5	115	33	0
Brown, Stratton	1	-4	0	0	0	0	0
Scott, De'Mari	0	0	0	1	20	20	0

FIELD GOALS	QTR	TIME	DISTANCE	RES
Kroening, Kody	1st	02:05	30 yds	Missed
Kroening, Kody	2nd	02:08	27 yds	Good

DEFENSE	TS	AT	TT	SACK-YD	TFL-YD	FF	FR-YD	INT-YD	BU	BLK	QBH
4 Edwards, Shan.	7	0	7	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
9 Riley, Curtis	6	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13 Smith, Derron	5	1	6	-	1-1	-	-	-	1	-	-
42 Camilli, Jeff	5	0	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17 Wilson, Kyrie	4	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
43 Mickelson, K.	4	1	5	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
28 Washington, C.	4	0	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
96 Hunt, Todd	3	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
31 Ederaine, E.	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
92 Davison, T.	2	1	3	-	2-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
99 Sagapolu, L.	2	1	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
90 Louis, Claud.	1	0	1	-	1-1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2B Washington, M.	10	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
91 Madsen, Nath.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
49 Swanson, Gar.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 Jones, Dalen	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
58 Faletuipapai, S.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
27 Lewis, Don.	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
41 Hughes, Bra.	0	1	1	-	-	1-0	-	-	-	-	-
57 Decosta, Ad.	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TM TEAM</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>							

### NEBRASKA

RUSHING	NO	GAIN	LOST	NET	TD	LG	Avg
Abdullah, Ameer	19	113	3	110	1	57	5.8
Cross, Imani	3	69	0	69	1	62	23.0
Armstrong Jr., Tommy	9	65	0	65	0	27	7.2
Newby, Terrell	7	19	1	18	0	7	2.6
Fyfe, Ryker	2	9	0	9	0	5	4.5
Nelson, Jordan	2	3	0	3	0	3	1.5
Nabity, Graham	1	3	0	3	0	3	3.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>6.7</b>

PASSING	C-A-I	YDS	TD	LONG	SACK
Armstrong Jr., Tommy	12-21-0	260	3	70	0
Fyfe, Ryker	2-3-0	22	1	12	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14-24-0</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>0</b>

RECEIVING	NO	YARDS	TD	LONG
Bell, Kenny	5	84	0	37
Hovey, Lane	3	48	0	29
Westerkamp, Jordan	2	85	1	70
Cotton, Sam	1	23	1	23
Carter, Cethan	1	20	1	20
Newby, Terrell	1	12	0	12
Bailey, C.	1	10	1	10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>70</b>

PUNTS	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	IN20	TB
Foltz, Sam	5	237	47.4	59	2	0

RETURNS	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG	INTERCEPTIONS
Pierson-El, Dem.	5	150	86	1	0	0	0
Newby, Terrell	0	0	0	1	20	20	0
Santos, David	0	0	0	1	-10		

**RUSHING OFFENSE:** Nebraska's rushing offense didn't really get going on Saturday in the way you'd like it too. The Huskers were able to hit the big play a few times – be it Ameer Abdullah's 56-yard run, Imani Cross's 62-yard run or a few Tommy Armstrong keepers – but for the most part Fresno State was controlling Nebraska's line of scrimmage. The offensive line wasn't getting big punches and outside of those big runs it really felt like Abdullah, Cross, Terrelle Newby and the rest of the ball carriers were having to really battle to eke out a few yards. This approach is fine against Fresno State but when Nebraska really needs Abdullah to grind out yards in Big Ten play, will the line step up? – *Mike Schaefer*

B

**PASSING OFFENSE:** Again this seems like an overly tough grade when Nebraska hit on a few big plays in the passing game, but Armstrong wasn't good for large stretches in the air. He finished around the 50 percent passing threshold. Nebraska needs to move the chains and not go deep as often as it does. That being said, Armstrong found Jordan Westerkamp for a 70-yard seam route to open the scoring. Then later he hit tight end Cethan Carter on a nice play action that went for a touchdown. The Huskers got nice production from Lane Hovey and Kenny Bell. Alonzo Moore could've really taken things over with a couple circus catches, but Armstrong hung him out to dry a little bit as well. It was also disappointing that Nebraska didn't get guys like Ryker Fyfe or Johnny Stanton reps earlier in the game. – *Mike Schaefer*

B

**RUSHING DEFENSE:** Fresno State was averaging about two yards per gain in the first half, and had just 35 rushing yards early in the third quarter. Part of that was due to the fact that Fresno is a spread team and seemed to be only mixing in the zone read game as a token gesture. But give credit to Nebraska's defensive tackles. The Huskers were more liberal with their rotations, and Fresno State didn't have an answer for Nebraska's combination of Vincent Valentine and Maliek Collins. It was also good to see Kevin Williams and Kevin Maurice get cracks in the middle of the line as well to help in the effort against the run. Nebraska gave up a late run to quarterback Brian Burrell, but we'll excuse it as a defense that was starting to look a little gassed – *Michael Bruntz*

A-

**PASSING DEFENSE:** Nebraska's secondary had yet to really be tested by a passing offense, and Fresno State had the athletes to give the Huskers trouble. Give Nebraska's defense credit in a couple of areas – Nebraska was aggressive with the blitz game, getting the ball out of quarterback Brian Burrell's hands early. Also, Nebraska's corners were battling and aggressively defending Fresno's slants and drag routes. Finally, Nebraska's secondary and linebackers flowed well to the short screen passes where the Bulldogs got the bulk of their yards. The yardage total might have been a bit high on Fresno's side for this kind of grade, but the Bulldogs ran a lot of offensive plays to help inflate the number. – *Michael Bruntz*

A-

**KICKING/SPECIAL TEAMS:** No matter how finely you dug through Nebraska's special teams performance on Saturday, you'd come up with the same grade. DeMornay Pierson-El returned a punt in the second quarter for an 86-yard touchdown. The electric freshman darn near housed another later in the second quarter, as he racked up 145 yards of punt returns on three attempts. Drew Brown missed a field goal in the first quarter, but bounced back to boot two field goals before halftime. For a unit that has been much-maligned, Saturday was a nice bounce-back. – *Michael Bruntz*

A+

## Quoting head coach Bo Pelini on what was said at halftime



**"I said we needed to come out with energy, which was hard to do. It was hard to keep your stinger in this game. That was the longest football game I've ever been a part of. It was a strange game, especially in the second half. I thought our guys kept playing and played hard. ... Now, let's get back to Lincoln as fast as we can. I want to get this team rested."**

A+

# GameNotes

## PUNT RETURN SHINES

Nebraska returned a punt for a touchdown Saturday for the first time since Ameer Abdullah went 81 yards in 2012 against Idaho State. True freshman De'Mornay Pierson-El went 86 yards in the second quarter to give the Huskers a 24-2 lead and a little confidence in a downtrodden unit.

"It was real satisfying," Pierson-El said. "Coach Pelini kept telling me that we could get one this week. He just wanted me to attack and go full speed and make good decisions and everything, so I was just excited that I would be able to get that."

Pierson-El wasn't done after taking one to the barn. The electric special teams weapon returned another punt 51 yards, nearly breaking off his second touchdown of the game.

It's quite the different look this year for a unit that averaged 3.0 yards per punt return a season ago and did not take one back for a score.

## HEAT TAKES A TOLL ON HUSKERS

The score may not have shown it, but Nebraska was gassed going into halftime at Fresno State. Up 27-5, the team had a handful of players cramping and others in need of medical attention. Local temperatures that soared into the mid 90s at game time caught the Huskers off guard.

"(Washington) D.C. is not hot like this," punt returner De'Mornay Pierson-El, who is from the D.C. area, said. "This was my first time to the West Coast, and I wasn't expecting it to be like this, but I did know it was going to be pretty hot. It was just another adjustment."

Pierson-El said he was alright himself, but some of his teammates were the worse for the wear midway through the game.

"I felt like we dealt with the heat pretty well," he said. "But a couple guys needed to pump a little bit more water into them. I know at halftime a couple guys had some IVs put into them."

Quarterback Tommy Armstrong shook off the heat as an excuse for anybody to miss time or play poorly. He pointed out that it gets hot in Nebraska as well.

"It was tough, but it was nothing we haven't seen before," he said. "In fall camp we practiced in hot weather. Tonight, it wasn't windy, it wasn't humid, it was just hot."

## GREGORY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Randy Gregory played for the first time since injuring himself on the first series two weeks ago against Florida Atlantic. He recorded three tackles, all solo, and put a mean hit on a Fresno receiver in the third quarter.

The star defensive end didn't have the biggest night of his career, failing to record a sack, but his presence was felt, nonetheless.

Nebraska's De'Mornay Pierson-El returns a punt 51 yards during the Fresno State game.



TONY KIEHN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

"It helps (our defense) a lot," cornerback Daniel Davie said. "Randy's actually my roommate, so I laugh at that a lot, him helping me be a better player and the secondary as a whole. Him and our whole d-line are very talented, so it's a good thing to have those guys as your teammates."

Gregory was part of a pass rush that got quarterback Brian Burrell off his timing. They got to him four times and hurried him on a handful of other occasions. As for Gregory himself, he didn't play the whole game because of some stomach sickness.

"He didn't feel good," coach Bo Pelini said. "It was really bothering him there after the first series or so and obviously the heat didn't help him for somebody who hasn't played for a while, but he felt better as the game went on,

which was a good sign. Trust me, he's a difference maker, so having him out there is important."

### SANTOS' WEIRD PLAY

Nebraska gave up two points in the early going on a play that will go down as one of the weirdest in Husker history.

With just over nine minutes to go in the first quarter, Fresno had the ball around the midfield stripe on fourth and medium and decided to try a quick kick. Quarterback Brian Burrell lined up in the shotgun and sent a pooch punt down the field. The kick bounced once and in the direction of Nebraska linebacker David Santos.

Santos jumped up around the 10-yard line and batted the ball through the back of the end

zone for a Husker safety. The linebacker was unavailable for comment after the game, and coach Bo Pelini was still confused as to what happened on that play.

"I don't know," he said. "I thought I'd seen it all, but that one took the cake."

### THREE IN A ROW

Sophomore wide receiver Jordan Westerkamp caught a career-long 70-yard touchdown pass in the first quarter to open the scoring.

Westerkamp caught a touchdown for the third consecutive game, marking the first Husker to have a touchdown reception in three-straight games since Quincy Enunwa caught a touchdown pass in each of the first three games last season.

# FINAL SCORE: NEBRASKA 55, FRESNO STATE 19



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: AMEER ABDUL-LAH BREAKS FREE FOR A 57-YARD TOUCHDOWN RUN IN THE FIRST QUARTER. JORDAN WESTERKAMP OUTRUNS THE FRESNO STATE DEFENSE ON HIS 79-YARD TOUCHDOWN CATCH. TOMMY ARMSTRONG JR. TRIES TO JUMP OVER A BULLDOG DEFENDER. MARCUS NEWBY TRIES TO BRING DOWN FRESNO STATE QUARTERBACK BRIAN BURRELL. LANE HOVEY RUNS AFTER MAKING ONE OF HIS CAREER-HIGH THREE CATCHES. COURTNEY LOVE (51) CREAMS LEKEN WILLIAMS ON A KICK RETURN.

PHOTOS BY  
TONY KIEHN/  
HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED





# 2Minute Drill

Punter Sam Foltz punts  
for Nebraska against  
McNeese State.

## SAM FOLTZ VISUALIZES HIS SUCCESS



JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

By Darren Ivy & Lanny Holstein

If you see Sam Foltz with his eyes closed, don't try to wake him up.

Chances are Nebraska's punter is just visualizing a booming punt that pins Miami deep in its own territory.

The sophomore likes to see himself have success mentally before going out onto the field for the real thing.

"When I go out there, I visualize what my punt's going to look like in the game, and then go out there and try to do the same thing, try to reenact it," he said. "I try to visualize my good punts and then go out and hit the ball."

Foltz picked up the visualization technique in high school. He and his teammates would take some time before every game to imagine themselves dismantling their opponents.

"The team would go in the gym or something and lay on our backs and visualize how it was going to go," Foltz said. "But I've gotten a lot deeper into it the more I've gotten into punting. It's really helped me out a lot with my confidence."

Punters are a different breed, according to Foltz. He wasn't always one of them in a pure sense, as he came to Nebraska hoping to play wide receiver as well, but the more he's specialized, the more he's leaned on visualization.

"It's crazy because with special teams and obviously the punter and the kicker, the game isn't physical for you, it's all mental," Foltz said. "It's a battle between you and yourself. I mean, visualization is the perfect thing for that, settle yourself down, reassure yourself that you're meant to be there, that you're going to hit the ball in the right situation."

It's also perfect for Foltz because he can use it any time he wants to. Sure, he likes to carve a little time out before heading to the field to get himself into the right mental state, but if he needs to refocus later, he can do that with visualization too.

"Before the game, in the hotel, before every punt, I do it all the time," Foltz said. "It's something I can do on the drop of a dime. It's something I can do whenever. It doesn't have to be a long process. You just have to shut your eyes for two seconds and you've already visualized your steps and what a good ball will look like."

The mind games are working for Foltz. He's in his second season as the Husker punter, and he earned his first Big Ten Special Teams Player of the Week honor after booting six punts against McNeese State with a 51.2 yard average.

Five of those punts went longer than 50 yards, including a 61-yarder in the fourth quarter that got Nebraska out of some trouble.

"I just try to keep my swing the same no matter what, try to stay consistent," he said. "You know, some of them are going to fly better than others depending on wind or how I'm getting through the ball. I've hit a couple 70-yarders in the air, but I've never really paid attention to it."

Foltz gives visualization part of the credit for his recent success and ability to get over some bad kicks early in his career.

"I've really matured a lot," he said. "Last year, I really didn't understand it because it was my first year doing it, but now I know how to bounce back from that. Life goes on, but the next time out there, you want to maximize the opportunity you get. I'm eager to get back out there."

He said he's eager to become one of the best at his craft as well and has studied other athletes at the tops of their games.

That's why he was open to trying visualization in high school and has stuck with it.

"I really bought into it because I've seen a lot of professional athletes do it," Foltz said. "When it comes to watching great athletes and what makes them great, visualization is a huge part of what they do, so I just kind of incorporated it into my game."

## HI'S TOP 5

# NEBRASKA GAMES AGAINST THE MIAMI HURRICANES

**Zach Wiegert blocks Ray Lewis during the 1995 Orange Bowl win over Miami.**



HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED ARCHIVES

### 1 1995 ORANGE BOWL

Cory Schlesinger scores two second-half touchdowns to lead NU to a 24-17 victory and a national title.

### 2 1983 ORANGE BOWL

No. 1 Nebraska chose to go for two and the win, but came up short and lost 31-30.

### 3 1962 GOTHAM BOWL

First-year coach Bob Devaney served notice NU was turning the corner with the 36-34 win in New York.

### 4 1953 GAME IN LINCOLN

Coach Bill Glassford's squad started 0-3-1 but won 20-16 before 39,000 fans in Memorial Stadium.

### 5 1975, 1976 SERIES

QB Vince Ferragamo led NU to comeback wins each year as NU made it three-straight regular-season wins.

*When Nebraska and Miami announced back in 2008 that the two schools were going to play a home and home series in 2014 and 2015 it seemed like years away. This week the first regular-season meeting between the two schools since 1976 is happening in Lincoln. The two schools have met five times in bowls between 1983 and 1991 with the winner being the national champion four times. NU holds a 3-1 regular-season advantage.*

Senior Josh Mitchell played before many family members and friends in Fresno, California.



# JABBERING WITH

# JOSH MITCHELL

*Nebraska senior Josh Mitchell looked forward to playing in his home state against Fresno State*

*Story By LANNY HOLSTEIN • Photo By MITCH OTTO*

*Fresno State gives you a chance to play in front of your hometown fans. How often do they make it to Lincoln?*

"Not very often. Not as a whole. My mom and my dad make it up to a few games but everyone else has busy schedules and they have things to do. They can't just fly up here all the time and come to games. The majority of them are on television anyways so they just tune in and watch, so for them to be able to come out to this game and be able to watch me play will be special."

***How many tickets are you aiming for?***

"I'm looking right now for 40 tickets, but I told some people that they needed to buy tickets because I wasn't going to be selfish, but it will be a lot of people. It will be a big "Go Josh" section."

***Are you going to pull some "senior weight" on the younger freshman to get their tickets?***

"I wouldn't even call it "senior weight" I would call it "West Coast weight." We don't have too many California kids on the team and then some people don't have a whole lot of other people coming. It's different for me the last time going there."

***The Fresno State game is a 9:30 p.m. CT kickoff. Do you like that?***

"I would like to play under the lights. Sometimes those night games, prime-time television, are just perfect and especially if it's hot out. Sometimes you just get out there and just get going and not sit around the hotel all day, those are always nice. Playing under the lights here is going to be nice. It will kind of be like Friday nights for me playing in high school. So that will be cool."

***After the McNeese State win, you talked about not going 9-4 again this season. How important is that to you?***

"Very important. Just like the seniors in front of us, they didn't want to go 9-4. They didn't want to be that team that was just, what I would say, average. When you start to get that feeling 'here we go again,' you have to do something different."

***Did those guys express regret to you?***

"Every year, you have those guys that when they come talk to you and when they come back they're like 'man I wish we could have done this, I wish it would have gone this way. You guys have a

lot of talent, be better than us.' All you want to do is just build on that."

***Did the McNeese State game serve as a wakeup call to the team?***

"Definitely. After the game there weren't guys in the locker room just talking and hanging out even though we won. Even the guys that didn't play, some of the redshirt guys. It was almost like we lost. I think that's a good thing. I think we need everyone to focus more from the top down. As a team there's a lot of areas that we need to improve and when you have games like we just had there's only one way to go about it. That's just to go out there and just handle your business. We don't need a lot of guys playing around, laughing around. We need to take it more seriously."

***The AP knocked you guys out of the top 25 for not performing well against McNeese State. Is that kind of harsh?***

"No, I don't think it was harsh. When you put on what we put on film, it's out there. I don't think it's harsh at all. I think all you can do is go out there and go play football and just try to be better. When you start looking at that you start trying to see if it's fair or not. It's not up to you if it's fair or not, you just have to go out there and put on your best game."

***In the wake of that game, you guys have talked a lot about the importance of first down defense. Why is that so important?***

"It opens up a different playbook for the offense. They can run little plays that just get down to that 3rd-and-2, 3rd-and-1, which makes it harder for the defense. If you can get them to 2nd-and-long, it's a different game for you. You can expect different routes, different things that happen. When you get down to a 3rd-and-long, that's the easiest down there is."

***As a senior and captain what do you tell younger guys in the secondary like Josh Kalu?***

"Just tell him to go out there and be confident. You practiced during the week, you know what you are doing, you know the game plan. Go out there with some confidence don't think I am a freshman so I have to play scared. He's been playing football his entire life, he knows what to do. It's no different."

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Nebraska senior Ameer Abdullah scores the winning touchdown against McNeese State on one of his few second-half touches.

JIM RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

### RECEIVERS HURTING

The once deep Nebraska receiving corps. took a few hits against McNeese State, causing the Husker staff to look at the position a little more closely.

With Jamal Turner out for the season with a torn achilles, Brandon Reilly and Sam Burtch still nursing hamstrings and Kenny Bell limited with a strained groin, other receivers need to step up, according to coach Bo Pelini.

"We need more detail in their game," the coach said about the likes of Alonzo Moore, Jordan Westerkamp and Taariq Allen. "You know I thought Westy made some great catches, but he can still learn a lot from that tape. Alonzo's just got to go turn

it loose. He's tremendously talented. At times I see him going out there more worried about making a mistake. He needs to just let his talent take over. He's a tremendous competitor and plays hard, but there are times he's playing tentatively."

Westerkamp led the team in receiving through two games with 11 catches for 186 yards. His acrobatic catches helped Nebraska out of more than a few jams in the early going, but he's only one man, and Nebraska likes to have as many as 10 receivers ready on game day.

That's why the potential redshirts on freshman Jariah Tolbert and Glenn Irons are getting close to the fire. De'mornay Pierson-El al-

ready burned his to move into the kickoff returner role.

Turner, on the other hand, might actually get a redshirt put on him this season, if Pelini gets his way.

"I've been wrong before, but I think it's going to be a slam dunk," the coach said. "I feel bad for the kid. It's one of those deals where, same thing, he's just running down the field and there goes his Achilles. I don't see that a lot in football. I see that more in basketball. It's kind of a weird deal. But I know it's an injury he'll come back from 100 percent. We'll get him back again for another year."

### AMEER NEEDS MORE TOUCHES

In the fourth quarter of

Nebraska's 31-24 win over McNeese State, running back Ameer Abdullah only touched the ball twice, something that didn't sit well with coach Bo Pelini.

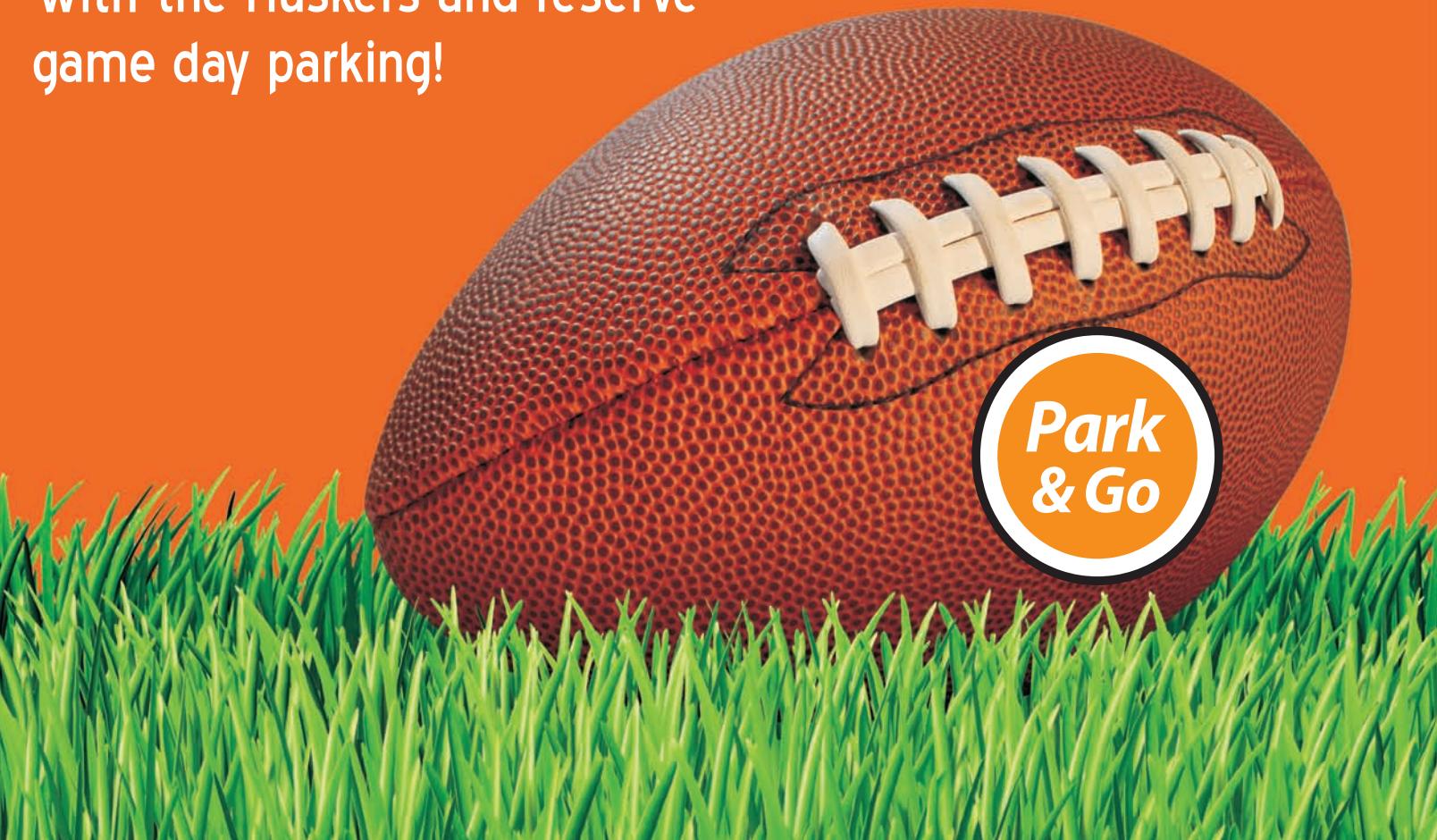
"It's my fault," the head man said. "They were crowding the box and daring us to throw it. When they're doing that, we had multiple opportunities in the passing game and we didn't take advantage of it. There are other ways to get Ameer the ball, and we should get him the ball."

Offensive coordinator Tim Beck had a similar account of the game as well, citing the need to attack McNeese State with the pass because of the defense they were in most of the game. He and Pelini both vowed to make amends head-

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ing into Fresno State.

"At the end of the day, he's our best football player," Pelini said. "We have to make sure to get the ball in his hands. I mean he's our best football player. We better make sure we get the ball in his hands. It takes a concerted effort to do so."

## COTTON WANTS TO MOVE ON FROM MISTAKES

Guard Jake Cotton had a rough day against McNeese State, one that he is glad to move past.

The senior cost his offense a couple of chunk-yardage plays with "stupid" penalties. The first of those came in the third quarter as Nebraska was trying to go in for a touchdown. His tripping penalty inside the five-yard line forced NU to settle for a field goal.

"They bluffed a thunder stunt and I threw a cut when I shouldn't have thrown a cut," Cotton said. "The guy's behind me, and I left my leg up to try to get him down. So that's on me, a bone-head play by me."

"As a senior, as a captain I can't do that at that point in the game. I have to be smarter than that and I have to execute better."

In the fourth quarter, Cotton killed another Nebraska drive when he ran too far downfield on a pass play. This time the penalty cost Nebraska a 41-yard pass and catch from Tommy Armstrong to Jordan Westerkamp on third down.

"The way the crowd reacted I thought Tommy was downfield making a run and he actually ran back the other way," Cotton said. "I was just trying to block, get a block downfield. Even then it's an idiotic play by me, it was stupid."

As a captain, Cotton said

Senior lineman Jake Cotton, second from left, is disappointed in himself for several penalties he's been called on the first two games.



TONY KIEHN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

he expects more of himself and that he won't make those same "bone headed" mistakes again.

"Really both things come down to me not being smart and kind of letting the game get to me," he said.

## LATE NIGHT FOOTBALL

It's the age-old debate: do college football players prefer to play at night, under the lights of primetime, or would the rather get up early, get it out of the way and be done with it?

The Huskers had no choice, but to wait anxiously in their hotel rooms on Saturday before the 7:30 PT (9:30 CT) kickoff.

"We don't schedule it, but that's football," guard Jake Cotton said. "You just play whenever they tell you play. Whether it's at 11 a.m. last week or 7:30 p.m. this week. Your approach doesn't change. You just have to go out there and execute."

Cotton said late kickoffs can mess with unfocused players. There's a lot of time before the game for minds to wander, so keeping occupied is important.

"You look at your notes a little bit, throughout the day," Cotton said. "You can't really cram for a game. If you're up there in your room all day Saturday trying to look up as much as you can then you're not prepared. You didn't do your work during the week. You have to do a little of both. Look at notes and kind of relax a little bit. You just have to stay focused."

## PIERSON-EL CONFIDENT RETURNING PUNTS

The Nebraska punt return unit has been historically bad under Bo Pelini.

In fact, last season the Huskers averaged a meager three yards per punt retrun.

But this season things are different. The Huskers add-

ed a player with some serious talent as the deep man. De'Mornay Pierson-El took over the job in Nebraska's second game against McNeese State, and he's not looking back.

"A lot of it is confidence," the true freshman said. "You have people running down at you full speed, and you can't really see them. You just kind of feel them coming, so you have to have a lot of confidence and just trust yourself to catch the ball."

He muffed one punt but it was recovered by a teammate against Fresno State and he produced an 86-yard return for a touchdown in his first road game of his career.

A simple approach guided him to the early success.

"Just catch the ball and make one person miss," Pierson-El said. "I just try to get as much yardage as I can, hopefully take one to the house."



# RECRUITING NOTEBOOK

BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER  
RECRUITING EDITOR  
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

## NU hoping to land athlete Jaason Lewis

Nebraska hosted athlete Jaason Lewis for the McNeese State weekend and impressed the four-star athlete with its facilities, staff support and campus layout. Lewis also enjoyed himself at the game and liked being around the team.

"The best facilities I've ever seen before with everything," he said. "The academic staff stood out a lot. The training facilities and athletic trainers stood out the most to me. They surprised me. The campus life really surprised me a lot with the way campus is set up. I was expecting boring Nebraska or something but it was actually really fun."

The Huskers needed to get Lewis in this weekend as the athlete plans to make a decision shortly on Sept. 23 between Arizona State, LSU, Nebraska, Ole Miss and UCLA. He chose that day because he wanted to make the decision on his niece's birthday. Lewis

takes a visit Arizona State on Sept. 20 and hopes to make a decision after that.

Lewis said Nebraska is talking to him about multiple positions on offense including running back and wide receiver. Lewis said he prefers those two spots over tight end or defense at this time.

Nebraska offered Lewis in July and started to build a relationship with John Papuchis and the program at that time.

"I was always interested in Nebraska so I messaged them last week and we got it all set up," he said. "We always messaged. We always messaged them about Nebraska and stuff. I just asked if I could visit."

Even though the Huskers didn't particularly play well, Lewis still enjoyed himself in Memorial Stadium.

"It was fun, the crowd got really into it," he said.

Another big part of the

weekend was meeting Jordan Westerkamp. The Husker wide receiver is quite notable now with his seemingly weekly impressive catches.

"He's the man," Lewis said. "I had to get a picture with him. Trust me I've seen (his highlights).

### NEBRASKA LOOKS TO MAKE MIAMI GAME A BIG RECRUITING WEEKEND

The Huskers are expected to host quite a number of recruits this weekend with the game against Miami. The atmosphere should be a good one with the Huskers playing in prime time and on national television.

Some of the big names expected include dual-threat quarterback Lamar Jackson from Florida (Louisville commit), defensive back Deshawn Raymond from Louisiana, safety Jemile Johnson from Texas, wide receiver Tavin Rich-

ardson from South Carolina and defensive end Rueben Jones from Florida.

The Huskers are definitely planning on mixing those players with its 2015 commitments like defensive linemen Carlos and Khalil Davis from Missouri, defensive back Eric Lee from Colorado and defensive lineman Daishon Neal from Omaha.

NU could also host several important top 2016 players. The Huskers got on the board with Jared Bubak in the early part of the month and could look to impress a few guys that are close enough to make the trip. Players like 2016 legacy 4-star lineman John Raridon and Sioux Falls lineman Matthew Farniok come to mind.

Regardless, Nebraska needs to carry some early season momentum through September because there won't be as many opportunities in October. **N**

# Pierson-El's 150 punt return yards at Fresno tops all of NU's 2013 totals

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

**MAKING JOKES ABOUT** Nebraska's punt return unit has been pastime for some Husker fans for more than a decade. It's a hard-to-please group, which has no problem evoking the name of fair catch specialist Santino Panico and lost sleep over Nebraska's ability to set up a viable punt return a year ago.

I've thought of those people – who had legitimate gripes – during the last couple Nebraska games as De'Mornay Pierson-El has seized the punt return duties in a way that hasn't been done in Lincoln since DeJuan Groce exhausted his eligibility more than a decade ago.

Pierson-El, a freshman from Virginia, has showed the flashes of what he's capable of the past weeks – nearly taking a return to the house against McNeese State, and succeeding on an 86-yard punt return for a touchdown here against Fresno State.

The winding, elusive run was the first punt return for a touchdown by a Husker player since Ameer Abdullah did it against lowly Idaho State in 2012. Pierson-El, a 5-foot-9, 175-pound wide receiver, dialed up the seventh-longest punt return for a touchdown in program history on the play, and cemented himself as the Huskers' go-to guy on punt returns.

"He's doing a great job," Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini said of Pierson-El. "Our guys blocked very well for him, but he's a fearless guy back there and somebody who can really make plays with the ball in his hands."

The mix of speed and elusiveness is one reason why coaches in the Virginia area evoked Percy Harvin's name when describing Pierson-El's potential and skill set. Harvin's name is often bandied about for quick, slot wide receiver types with a knack for making plays. Pierson-El fit the moniker, though he was never really able to find a home on the field as a high school standout in the Washington D.C. area.

As a senior, Pierson-El played primarily quarterback – that after playing running back as a junior and wide receiver as a sophomore. The Swiss Army Knife approach held one common theme – the kid could get up the field in a hurry.

He showed that Saturday night in Fresno, getting to the sideline and showing a nice burst to finish off the play. He nearly took a second punt return to the house later in the game, returning a punt for 51 yards before being tackled.

Pierson-El finished the game with five returns for 150 yards and the



**His mix of speed  
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skill set.**

touchdown. It should be noted, for those concerned about the state of the punt return, that Pierson-El's 150 yards on Saturday exceeded Nebraska's total of 121 yards in punt returns for the entire 2013 season.

After Saturday's game, Pierson-El expressed surprise when he was told that his return went 86 yards.

"I maybe had to make one or two people miss, and it was a clear shot," Pierson-El said. "I bounced back inside and had an escort."

While Pierson-El has been electric on the punt return units, it would be an oversight to not acknowledge the job Nebraska's coaching staff has done in coaching and emphasizing the punt return this year. Pelini has been much more involved since the spring in coaching special teams, and going through film with a fine-tooth comb. Nebraska's punt return units have also done a much better job of blocking and setting up returns – a big part of Pierson-El's success on Saturday.

Pelini has called Pierson-El "fearless" and "electric" in the punt return. We saw why on Saturday.

"Coach Pelini told me, 'we can get one this week,'" Pierson-El said. "That's what he told me. He was saying, 'I want you to attack and go full speed.' I was excited to be able to get that one. It's been the first one for awhile, so I was just happy that I got to contribute to the team." **N**

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HuskersIllustrated.com  
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## Scouting Report



# Miami Hurricanes

*Miami brings two-game winning streak into Lincoln for primetime showdown.* | DOUG GRIFFITHS

Miami will head to Lincoln for its showdown with the Huskers riding a two-game winning streak.

The Hurricanes started the season with a loss at Louisville, but have rebounded to post victories over inferior opponents

in the last two weeks.

Miami will bring an aggressive defense and plenty of firepower on offense to Memorial Stadium along with its usual plethora of football talent in what should be one of the marquee games in college



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MIAMI SPORTS INFORMATION

Freshman quarterback Brad Kaaya has thrown seven touchdowns passes and five interceptions this season.

## THE VITALS

**WHAT:** Miami (Fla.) @ Nebraska

**WHEN/WHERE:** 7 p.m. CDT, Sept. 20 in Lincoln (Memorial Stadium capacity 87,000)

**TV:** CBS Sports Network.

**Radio:** The Husker Sports Network broadcasts the action to 27 statewide radio markets. KFAB (1110 AM) serves as the Omaha affiliate and KLIN (1400 AM) serves as the Lincoln affiliate, while KRVN (880 AM) is a third affiliate that reaches around the state. Join Greg Sharpe (play-by-play), Matt Davison (color and co-hosts Husker Game Day Pregame Show), Lane Grindle (sideline/post-game, co-hosts Husker Game Day), Steve Taylor (co-hosts Husker Game Day Show and Big Red Reaction Show) and Matt Coatney (hosts Big Red Reaction Show and helps anchor postgame studio coverage) for all the action. The game can also be heard live on Huskers.com and SIRIUS Satellite Radio.

**COACHES:** Nebraska: Bo Pelini (60-24 overall, 34-14 in the Big Ten, seven seasons). Miami: Al Golden (24-16 overall, 13-12 in the Atlantic Coast Conference, four seasons).

**SERIES:** Tied 5-5

## MIAMI FAST FACTS

**Location:** Coral Gables, Fla.

**Enrollment:** 15,629

**All-Time Football Record:** 590-335-19

**Conference Championships:** 9 (Big East)

**Post-Season Record:** 18-17

**Consensus All-Americans:** 35

**Lettermen Returning/Lost:** 51/20

**Starters Returning/Lost:** 13/12 (including specialists)

## DID YOU KNOW?

In its last 16 games, Miami has gone 11-5.

## 2014 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Result
Sept. 1	@ Louisville	L, 13-31
Sept. 6	Florida A&M	W, 41-7
Sept. 13	Arkansas State	W, 41-20
Sept. 20	@ Nebraska	
Sept. 27	Duke	
Oct. 4	@ Georgia Tech	
Oct. 11	Cincinnati	
Oct. 23	@ Virginia Tech	
Nov. 1	North Carolina	
Nov. 15	Florida State	
Nov. 22	@ Virginia	
Nov. 29	Pitt	

## Scouting Report



football during week No. 4.

### DEFENSIVE MENTALITY

The Canes have one of the nation's best defenses, allowing less than 20 points per game.

Miami has recorded 11 sacks through three games.

It entered the Arkansas State game, allowing 225 yards, which ranked eighth nationally.

In addition, the Canes' 41-7 win over Florida A&M marked the first time since 2010 that their defense gave up zero points. The Rattlers' TD came on a botched punt snap that was recovered in the end zone.

Miami held Arkansas State's high-tempo offense to 329 yards on 89 plays.

### CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Miami's special teams are struggling.

Arkansas State had two long kickoff returns that helped set up scores and the Red Wolves recovered an onside kick to start the second half.

"Clearly, we have to do a better job covering kicks," Miami head coach Al Golden said. "We gave up starting field position."

Kicker Matt Goudis didn't play against Arkansas State due to a back injury so red-shirt freshman kicker Michael Badgley got the nod. He was 5-of-6 on extra points.

### QUARTERBACK SILENCES CRITICS

After being interception prone in his first two games, Miami fans were clamoring for quarterback Brad Kaaya to be pulled from the starting lineup.

However, Golden stuck with Kaaya instead of going to graduate transfer Jake Heaps and the move paid dividends.

Against Arkansas State, Kaaya completed 16-of-24 passes for 342 yards and four touchdowns.

### FAB FRESHMAN

Wide receiver/kick returner Stacy Coley posted one of the best freshman seasons in program history in 2013. He was a Freshman All-America after leading the team with 1,491 all-purpose yards, the 10th-highest single-season total in school history.

Coley had 10 TDs and was the only

FBS player in '13 to record a touchdown via rushing, receiving, kick return and punt return.

Coley didn't play against Arkansas State due to a right shoulder injury. He is questionable for the Nebraska game.

### REMEMBER WHEN?

#### No. 1 Miami 37, No. 4 Nebraska 14

Jan. 3, 2002 at Pasadena, California

Miami silenced the doubters with a convincing win over Nebraska in the Rose Bowl to earn its fifth national title.

The Hurricanes' defense shut down Heisman Trophy winner Eric Crouch and the powerful Husker offense.

Miami's Ken Dorsey and Andre Johnson teamed up for a pair of TDs to earn co-MVP honors.

Dorsey threw for 362 yards and three touchdowns.

Johnson hauled in seven passes for 199 yards and the two scores.

The Hurricanes scored 34 points in the first half to cruise to the title.

Nebraska was held to just 62 yards passing. Crouch ran for 114 yards on 22 carries.

### LAST TIME OUT

#### Miami 41, Arkansas State 20

Sept. 13, 2014 at Miami, Florida

The Hurricanes improved to 2-1 with a 21-point home victory over Arkansas State.

It was the Phillip Dorsett and Brad Kaaya show.

Dorsett had 201 receiving yards and two touchdowns and Kaaya threw four touchdown passes.

Running back Duke Johnson pitched in 90 yards (on 14 carries) and a score.

Miami had touchdowns on its first three drives.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Outside linebacker Denzel Perryman, a 2013 All-ACC first-team selection, is considered one of the biggest hitters in college football. He led the Canes with 108 tackles a year ago en route to honorable mention All-America honors.

- When running back Duke Johnson rushes for at least one score, Miami is 13-0.

- Miami is penalty prone. It was penalized 11 times for 93 yards against Arkansas State.

### Coach Al Golden



**Resume:**  
Has a 51-50 record as a collegiate head coach, including 24-16 overall, 13-12 in the

ACC as Miami's boss. Prior to taking over the Hurricane program for the 2011 season, Golden guided Temple's program from 2007-10 where he had a 27-34 record.

### KNOW YOUR FOE

#### Phillip Dorsett, WR, 5-10, 185, Sr.



Recorded 201 receiving yards against Arkansas State, marking the third time in program history that a player had over 200 receiving yards.

#### Brad Kaaya, QB, 6-4, 218, Fr.



Threw for a career-high 342 yards in the win over Arkansas State. It was the most passing yards for a Miami true freshman quarterback in a single game in Hurricanes history.

#### Duke Johnson, RB, 5-9, 206, Jr.



With 97 rushing yards in the team's win over Florida A&M, Johnson moved past Frank Gore into ninth place in program history in all-time rushing yards (2,054). In 2013, Johnson was a second-team All-ACC performer after rushing for 920 yards and six touchdowns in eight games before suffering a season-ending ankle injury.

### 2013 RESULTS

#### (9-4 overall, 5-1 Mountain West)

Date	Opponent	Result
Aug. 30	Florida Atlantic	W, 34-6
Sept. 7	Florida	W, 21-16
Sept. 21	Savannah State	W, 77-7
Sept. 28	@South Florida	W, 49-21
Oct. 5	Georgia Tech	W, 45-30
Oct. 17	@ North Carolina	W, 27-23
Oct. 26	Wake Forest	W, 24-21
Nov. 2	@ Florida State	L, 14-41
Nov. 9	Virginia Tech	L, 24-42
Nov. 16	@ Duke	L, 30-48
Nov. 23	Virginia	W, 45-26
Nov. 29	@ Pitt	W, 41-31
Dec. 28	Louisville*	L, 9-36

\*Russell Athletic Bowl

BIGTEN BEAT | COMPILED BY DOUG GRIFFITHS

# Nebraska, Penn State are only unbeaten teams left in the Big Ten Conference



Just when you thought things couldn't get any worse for the Big Ten, they did. Just ask Iowa and Indiana.

The Hawkeyes and Hoosiers lost games they were favored in, inflicting yet another weekend of negativity for the conference.

Big Ten teams went just 3-7 this week, including 0-4 against the Power 5.

Two of those losses came from Minnesota and Illinois, who were blown out on the road by TCU and Washington, respectively.

This week's results followed an 8-5 record a week earlier. Two of those victories came against FCS schools. Plus, both top-10 ranked Michigan State and Ohio State lost and the conference failed to pick up a win versus the Power 5.

Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany isn't panicking or if he is, he's not telling anyone.

"I look at the big picture, in part," said Delany to ESPN.com. "I recognize we haven't won a (national) championship since '02. I look at it in that way. I see the narrative, and if we had two or three (big games), we'd be feeling better."

"We're not feeling very good, but the facts are the facts."

And the facts are ugly and seem to be getting uglier.

Following *Huskers Illustrated* recaps Week Three of football happenings around the Big Ten.

## EAST DIVISION INDIANA HOOSIERS

### EAST DIVISION

#### 2014 Standings

Team	Overall	Conference
Penn State	3-0	1-0
Michigan	2-1	0-0
Ohio State	2-1	0-0
Maryland	2-1	0-0
Rutgers	2-1	0-1
Indiana	1-1	0-0
Michigan State	1-1	0-0

### WEST DIVISION

Team	Overall	Conference
Nebraska	3-0	0-0
Illinois	2-1	0-0
Iowa	2-1	0-0
Minnesota	2-1	0-0
Purdue	1-2	0-0
Wisconsin	1-1	0-0
Northwestern	0-2	0-0

#### Sept. 13 Results

Nebraska 55, Fresno State 19

Ohio State 66, Kent State 0

Bowling Green 45, Indiana 42

West Virginia 40, Maryland 37

Michigan 34, Miami (Ohio) 10

Iowa State 20, Iowa 17

TCU 30, Minnesota 7

Washington 44, Illinois 19

Notre Dame 30, Purdue 14\*

Penn State 13, Rutgers 10

IDLE: Michigan State, Northwestern, Wisconsin

\*Indianapolis, Ind. (Lucas Oil Stadium)

#### Sept. 20 Games

Miami (Fla.) at Nebraska, 7 p.m.

Iowa @ Pittsburgh, 11 a.m.

Eastern Michigan @ Michigan State, 11 a.m.

Western Illinois @ Northwestern, 11 a.m.

Southern Illinois @ Purdue, 11 a.m.

Bowling Green @ Wisconsin, 11 a.m..

Maryland @ Syracuse, 11:30 a.m.

Utah @ Michigan, 2:30 p.m.

Rutgers @ Navy, 2:30 p.m.

Massachusetts @ Penn State, 3 p.m.

San Jose State @ Minnesota, 3 p.m.

Texas State @ Illinois, 3 p.m.

Indiana @ Missouri, 3 p.m.

All times CT



# BIG TEN



Indiana's hopes to become bowl eligible took a serious hit with its loss at Bowling Green, a team that was blown out by Western Kentucky.

IU's defensive woes that have plagued the program for years, like missed tackles and giving up chunks of yardage to opponents' passing games reared their ugly head against the Falcons.

IU allowed 571 yards in the three-point road loss, including 395 through the air. One look at the Hoosiers' remaining schedule and one is hard pressed to find five more victories that would make IU bowl eligible, which is the No. 1 goal the program has in 2014.

### MARYLAND TERRAPINS

Maryland lost a heartbreaker at home to West Virginia as it was torched by quarterback Clint Trickett, who threw for 511 yards and four touchdowns.

The Terrapins rallied from a 22-point deficit only to see WVU's Josh Lambert kick a game-winning 47-yard field goal as time expired.

### MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS

The Spartans enjoyed a bye week this week and spent their week regrouping.

MSU says its goals are still in reach despite its tough loss at Oregon.

"There is always disappointment when you lose a big football game," Spartan coach Mark Dantonio said. "But young people are resilient so we will be able to move past that."

"I think all our goals are still there. I've said before the No. 1 goal is to get in that (Big Ten championship) game. If we do that, good things are gonna happen. That's what we can control. Some of the things we cannot control, but that's what we can control."

### MICHIGAN WOLVERINES

The Wolverines bounced back from their debacle at Notre Dame to beat Miami (Ohio) at home.

Derek Gren ran for 137 yards and a pair of touchdowns as Michigan overcame three first-half turnovers.

The Wolverines weren't overly im-

pressive against a team that has lost 19 straight. Michigan star receiver Devin Funchess did not play in the game after hurting his leg against the Irish.

A couple days after the Notre Dame game, Wolverine coach Brady Hoke said Funchess was "fine."

### RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS

The Scarlet Knights appeared to be headed for an impressive Big Ten debut at home against Penn State. However, the Nittany Lions scored 10 fourth-quarter points to spoil Rutgers' Big Ten opener. Earlier in the week, Rutgers coach Kyle Flood was awarded a two-year extension, which will keep him on the Scarlet Knights' sideline through 2019 and will push his salary to \$1.25 million next season.

### OHIO STATE BUCKEYES

You knew Ohio State would be peeved about its loss to Virginia Tech. Unfortunately for visiting Kent State, the Buckeyes took out their frustrations on the Golden Flashes. Ohio State hung 66 points on Kent State.

Quarterback J.T. Barrett tied a school record with six touchdown passes, including five in the first half.

The win was the 39th in a row over an instate opponent for Ohio State.

### PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS

Penn State had a very good week. First, it got an early Christmas gift when the NCAA lifted some important sanctions levied on the program as a result of the Jerry Sandusky child abuse scandal. As a result, the Nittany Lions will be able to compete in the postseason this year and will have a full compliment of scholarships in 2015. The university still must pay a \$60 million fine, vacate 111 wins that came under Joe Paterno, and the school will remain under monitoring.

Then it opened Big Ten play with a thrilling come-from-behind win at Rutgers. Bill Belton scored on a five-yard run with just over a minute to play. Quarterback Christian Hackenberg led a six-play, 80-yard game-winning drive.

### WEST DIVISION

#### ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI

The Illini hit the road for the first time in 2014 and weren't competitive, losing to Washington by 25 points.

Illinois committed three turnovers, including two that were returned for touchdowns, as the visitors trailed 38-12 at halftime.

The Illini allowed 464 yards, including 245 yards rushing. Illinois quarterback Wes Lunt had a long day being sacked five times. The Illini were just 1 of 11 on third down and committed 11 penalties.

#### IOWA HAWKEYES

Iowa entered the season with a lot of people believing it could win the Big Ten's West Division, but in its loss to Iowa State, it didn't look anything like championship caliber.

It was the Cyclones' first win of the season after they had lost to North Dakota State and Kansas State.

Iowa gave up the game-winning score – a 42-yard field goal – with two seconds left.

The Hawkeyes talented senior offensive tackle Brandon Scherff, considered one of the top offensive line prospects in the country in the NFL's eyes, played after hurting his right knee a week earlier in the win over Ball State.

#### MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS

Minnesota really laid an egg in its first road game of the season.

The Gophers fell behind 30-0 before scoring. TCU's defense smothered Minnesota's run-oriented attack and forced five turnovers.

Minnesota had just 99 yards rushing, 134 below its average.

#### NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS

The Wildcats had the week off to try and figure out why their offense has been so sluggish this season.

Northwestern hasn't had much of a running game, the offensive line has struggled in pass protection, receivers have dropped passes and quarterback Trevor Siemian has been inaccurate

# How Nebraska's 2014 Opponents Fared?



**FLORIDA ATLANTIC**  
Result: W, Tulsa 50-21  
Up Next: Wyoming  
Current Record: 1-2



**MCNEESE STATE**  
Result: W, Prairie View A&M 48-16  
Up Next: Arkansas Tech  
Record: 1-1



**FRESNO STATE**  
Result: L, Nebraska 55-19  
Up Next: Southern Utah  
Record: 0-3



**MIAMI**  
Result: W, Arkansas State 41-20  
Up Next: Nebraska  
Record: 2-1



**ILLINOIS**  
Result: L, Washington 44-19  
Up Next: Texas State  
Current Record: 2-1



**MICHIGAN STATE**  
Result: L, Oregon 46-27  
Up Next: Eastern Michigan  
Record: 1-1



**NORTHWESTERN**  
Result: L, Northern Illinois 23-15  
Up Next: Western Illinois  
Record: 0-2



**RUTGERS**  
Result: L, Penn State 13-10  
Up Next: Navy  
Record: 2-1



**PURDUE**  
Result: L, Notre Dame 30-14  
Up Next: Southern Illinois  
Current Record: 1-2



**WISCONSIN**  
Result: W, Western Illinois 37-3  
Up Next: Bowling Green  
Record: 1-1



**MINNESOTA**  
Result: L, TCU 30-7  
Up Next: San Jose St.  
Record: 2-1



**IOWA**  
Result: L, Iowa State 20-17  
Up Next: Pittsburgh  
Record: 2-1

## WEST



on throws. Now, under scrutiny is the 'Cats' play calling. So far, Northwestern has thrown 110 passes, while run the ball 56 times. That's not exactly the kind of balance Coach Pat Fitzgerald is looking for.

### PURDUE BOILERMAKERS

The Boilermakers put up a fight for one half against Notre Dame in Indianapolis, but didn't have enough offense to keep up with the 11th-ranked Fighting Irish. Purdue lost its seventh straight game to its instate rival and won't play Notre Dame again until 2020.

The Boilermakers' offense continues to struggle scoring points. In its last two games, Purdue has averaged just 15.5 points per game.

Against the Irish, the Boilermakers turned the ball over three times, once at Notre Dame's 5-yard line.

Purdue started Danny Etling at quar-



## EAST



terback. The sophomore threw for 234 yards and a pair of scores, but was picked off twice and missed another receiver on an easy pass that likely would've gone for a touchdown.

### WISCONSIN BADGERS

Badger coach Gary Andersen is feeling better about his team these days than say a few weeks back when it lost to LSU. A couple home wins will do that, plus a bye week doesn't hurt either.

Andersen says quarterback Tanner McEvoy is improving and so are his receivers.

Andersen knows his team will have to look to the air if teams are going to overload the box to stop the Badgers' running game.

"If people are going to load it up, plus one or even more than plus one, you have to be able to throw the football," Andersen said.



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# Huskers Illustrated's Projected Nebraska Depth Chart

## DEFENSE

### P/Holder

Sam Foltz  
Mauro Bondi  
Johnny Stanton

### LS

Josh Faulkenberry  
Paul Kelly

### FS

Nate Gerry  
Zach Stovall

### SS

Corey Cooper  
Anthony Ridder

### NICKEL

Byerson Cockrell  
Josh Kalu

### PR

De'Mornay Pierson-El  
Kenny Bell

### CB

Jonathan Rose  
Daniel Davie

### WDE

Randy Gregory  
Jack Gangwish

### NT

Vincent Valentine  
Kevin Maurice

### DT

Maliek Collins  
Kevin Williams

### SDE

Greg McMullen  
Marcus Newby

### CB

Josh Mitchell  
Chris Jones

### WRX

Kenny Bell  
Sam Burtch

### LT

Alex Lewis  
David Knevel

### LG

Jake Cotton  
Chongo Kondolo

### C

Mark Pelini  
Givens Price

### RG

Mike Moudy  
Givens Price

### RT

Zach Sterup  
Givens Price

### TE

Cethan Carter  
Sam Cotton

### WRZ

Alonzo Moore  
Taariq Allen

### WRA

Jordan Westerkamp  
Lane Hovey

### QB

Tommy Armstrong Jr.  
Ryker Fyfe

### IB

Ameer Abdullah  
Imani Cross

### KR

Kenny Bell  
Alonzo Moore

### PK

Drew Brown  
Mauro Bondi

### FB

Andy Janovich  
Mitch McCann

## OFFENSE



### Last Week, Season

**Darren Ivy**  
**(4-3, 10-11)**

**Mike Schaefer**  
**(3-4, 12-9)**

**Michael Bruntz**  
**(3-4, 13-8)**

**Bob Hamar**  
**(3-4, 10-11)**

**Terry Douglass**  
**(5-2, 14-7)**

**Doug Griffiths**  
**(3-4, 12-9)**

**Lanny Holstein**  
**(5-2, 15-6)**

Nebraska vs Miami

NU 42-17

NU 24-20

NU 31-27

NU 38-21

NU 27-24

NU 31-24

NU 31-21

Auburn at Kansas State

Kansas State

Auburn

Auburn

Auburn

Auburn

Auburn

Auburn

Iowa at Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh

Iowa

Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh

Iowa

Iowa

Clemson at Florida State

Utah at Michigan

Michigan

Utah

Michigan

Utah

Michigan

Michigan

Utah

Maryland at Syracuse

Maryland

Maryland

Maryland

Maryland

Maryland

Maryland

Maryland

Virginia at BYU

Virginia

BYU

BYU

BYU

Virginia

BYU

BYU



# WEST GRAND ISLAND

95 miles

## Fyfe utilizes strengths to run the offense



**HUSKER QUARTERBACK RYKER FYFE PROBABLY WOULDN'T BE PLAYING FOOTBALL AT NEBRASKA IF THE TEAM WAS STILL RUNNING THE OPTION OFFENSE.**

He grew up watching the likes of Eric Crouch and Jamaal Lord pitch the ball to running backs like Dahrran Diedrick and Thunder Collins, but when Nebraska switched over to a more pass-oriented attack under Bill Callahan, it made him think about playing for the Big Red.

"When I was about 7, that Eric Crouch team that played Miami, that was one of the first games I really remember watching," Fyfe said. "I remember just growing up in the Callahan era, them throwing the ball a lot with Zach Taylor and Joe Ganz, guys like that."

It's not that Fyfe can't run. It's just that it's not his forte. He'd rather chuck the rock.

"I'm not fast, but when I see somebody chasing me, I feel like I'm pretty quick," the quarterback said. "I wouldn't be a great option quarterback like Eric Crouch. I'm not that good at that, but I'm okay at the spread."

He's a lot better at the spread now than he was a few years back. Growing up in Grand Island, Fyfe said he played in some old-school offenses like the wing-T, but midway through high school, the offense changed to his liking.

"We moved to the spread, and I liked it because you get to throw the ball more and it's easier to read defenses," Fyfe said. "It was easy for me to transition from high school to college."

The only differences from what Fyfe was doing in

high school to college were a few plays and the terminology that offense coordinator Tim Beck employs. As a quarterback, Fyfe said it was a big advantage to know his reads right away as a freshman.

Fast forward to fall 2014, and Fyfe found himself in a battle for positioning on the Husker depth chart. With Taylor Martinez graduated and out of the picture, Nebraska needed to find the next signal caller, and Fyfe saw an opportunity to move into the race.

"When Taylor left, my first thought was I was going to come in and compete for the starting job," Fyfe said. "If I do a good job, I can try and get a scholarship, so that's what I did."

Husker coach Bo Pelini made it known to the walk-ons when Fyfe came in that they would have a great chance at free schooling if they could crack the two-deep. That was in the back of the G.I. native's head as he worked in the offseason, and although he didn't have the experience of Tommy Armstrong, he knew he didn't need to beat him out to make the two-deep.

The race for a scholarship came down to Fyfe and highly-touted recruit Johnny Stanton, in all reality.

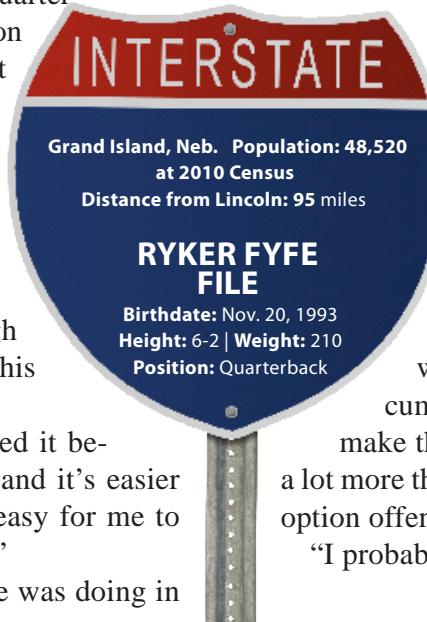
"We always split reps, so there was a competition, but I kind of rose to the top," Fyfe said of the battle between he and Stanton. "I split reps with Tommy for a while too, but he kind of rose to the top. It just went down like that, one, two, three."

Fyfe said he's still working to overtake Armstrong as the starter, but he understands why the coaching staff would give him the edge with his incumbent experience. But even if he doesn't

make that happen, second string at Nebraska is a lot more than he would have dreamed watching the option offense growing up.

"I probably wouldn't be here," he said.

~ Story by Lanny Holstein



Ryker Fyfe tosses a pass against Florida Atlantic in the season-opener.



Joe Mixan/Huskers Illustrated

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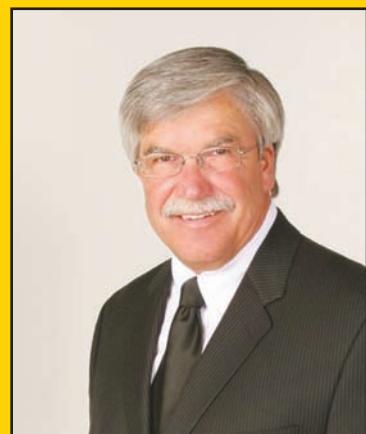
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**MLS.**

# Catching up with **ZACH WIEGERT**

Offensive Lineman 1991-94

By Butch Rasmussen/Huskers Illustrated

The Outland Trophy! Now that's a big deal. It's given only once each season in college football to the nation's top interior lineman and there are about 1,300 college football players eligible for the award each year.

It's been 20 years since Zach Wiegert earned the Outland Trophy for his exemplary play as an offensive tackle at Nebraska. Wiegert and others have established Nebraska as the team to beat for the Outland. Wiegert is among nine former Husker players to bring that coveted trophy back to Lincoln. Oklahoma is a distant second in Outland Trophy count at five.

Wiegert's been on the fast track since high school at Fremont, a city of about 26,000, people 35 miles northwest of Omaha. He was an All-State football player at Fremont Bergan High School, saw a lot of playing time as a freshman at Nebraska and was a full-time starter for the rest of his Husker career.

The UCLA game and the Kansas game in 1994 in Lincoln stand out in Wiegert's mind. He was honored as Chevrolet's Player of the Game, (a rare honor for an offensive lineman) in a 49-21 rout of 13th-ranked UCLA. He said the Kansas game was memorable because it was the

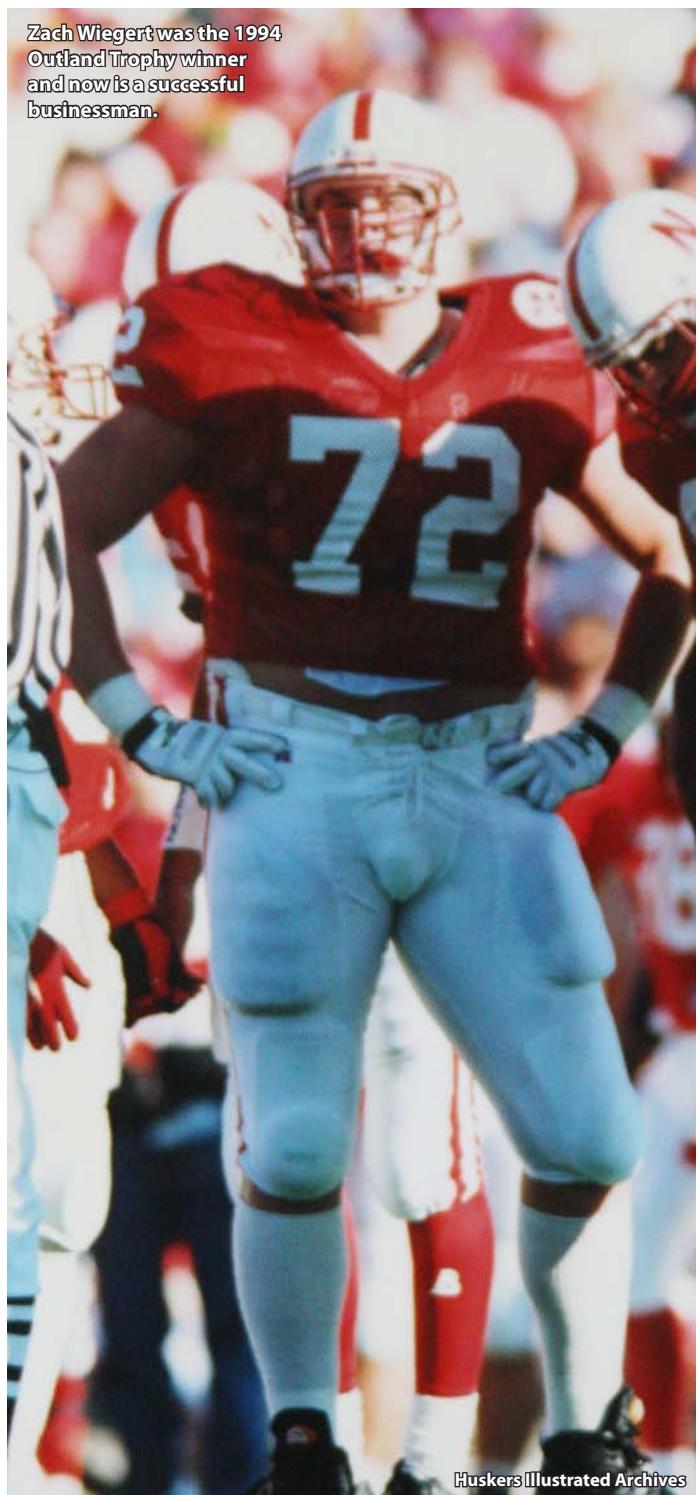
last time he'd have the honor of playing at home in front of the best fans in the world.

After 12 years in the NFL he had multiple contract offers for another four years when he decided to pursue his future and opt out.

After the NFL, Wiegert organized Tetrad Property Group in Omaha with a partner and today he serves that company as President and CEO. The company today builds \$100 million office and research complexes. They recently were awarded a potential \$300 million project from the city of Omaha to demolish Omaha's Civic Auditorium and replace it with a complex including a business tower, apartments, shops and restaurants over the four square block area in downtown Omaha.

Wiegert looked trim at 6 feet, 5 inches tall and 205 pounds under his playing weight when he recently stood in a dark business suit with Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert as she announced the news that Wiegert's company

Zach Wiegert was the 1994 Outland Trophy winner and now is a successful businessman.



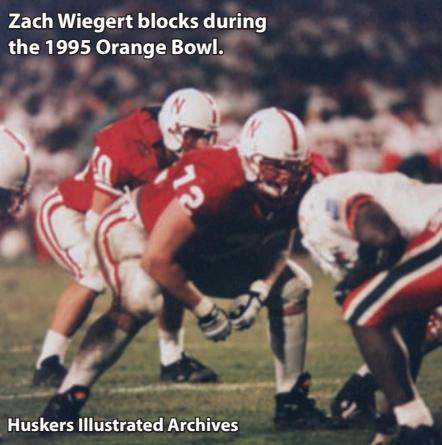
Huskers Illustrated Archives

had received the project commitment.

Today Wiegert runs his company with the help of close associates and enjoys the good life with wife Amy, and children, Zachary (10) and Zoe (8). He fills time away from his business obligations by coaching Zachary's youth football team.

Did I hear right in the telling from Zach? The coaching staff of this team of 10-year-olds includes Heisman Trophy winner Eric Crouch, acknowledged as the best college football player in the country in 2001, and Zach Wiegert, winner of the Outland Trophy as the best interior lineman in the country in 1994. There surely will be some future Huskers on this team.

"The last game I ever played for Nebraska was the 1995 Orange Bowl when we beat Miami for the national championship," Zach offered. "I'll always be a die-hard Husker fan," Wiegert gives credit for his development and consistency as a Husker lineman to NU line



coaches Milt Tenopir and Dan Young.

It was Tenopir who first called on Zach to recruit him for the Huskers and later, the main man himself.

"It was unreal," Wiegert said. "The Legendary Tom Osborne coming to our small house in Fremont. But my brother Erik went through the process three years before me so Mom was used to it."

Wiegert said Osborne was honest and

the focus was on school and getting a good education. He said Osborne told him if he worked real hard he might get to play one year at Nebraska. It's a testament, then, to Wiegert's hard work and natural physical ability that he became a three-year starter and the best interior lineman in college football as a senior.

"So where do you keep your Outland Trophy?" I asked. "It sits on the desk in my home office" he replied, "and I'm always mindful that it took the efforts of the entire offensive line as my partners for me to win that award.

"In high school you wonder if you can play at the college level," Wiegert added, "but you get there and you find out they're no better than you are and it's kind of a surprise so you settle in and work hard to compete."

Through high school and during his first few years on the Husker varsity there was never a thought the Outland Trophy was in his future but it eventually found a place on his desk.

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# IN THE RedZone

## Wistrom, Bullocks brothers represent home states

By Kalani Simpson

*Huskers Illustrated*

You may or may not have done well in geography in school, but now we're giving you another chance. Husker geography. That's right – this is the perfect subject for tailgate arguments, bar bets or radio drive-time talk shows (you're welcome).

It's time to answer that age-old question: Who is the best all-time Husker from each state? In the last issue, *Huskers Illustrated* looked at the best players to come out of Wisconsin. This week we move on to Missouri and Tennessee.

Husker  
Geography  
Part 17

### MISSOURI

**Grant Wistrom**

*Rush End, 1994-97*

Gee, all he did was win three national championships in four years. Big deal, right? Wistrom arrived on the scene immediately, seeing prime time as a freshman on the 1994 national championship team. He was conference newcomer of the year.

The accolades poured in as his career went on. Big 12 defensive player of the year, twice. Two-time first-team All-American. Big 12 male athlete of the year. Lombardi Trophy winner. Eventually, College Football Hall of Fame.

But the best part about Wistrom is that none of that meant anything. He's an all-time great not because of accolades, but because of his impact. His aura. He, along with his partner Jason Peter, helped establish the Blackshirts as a national brand.

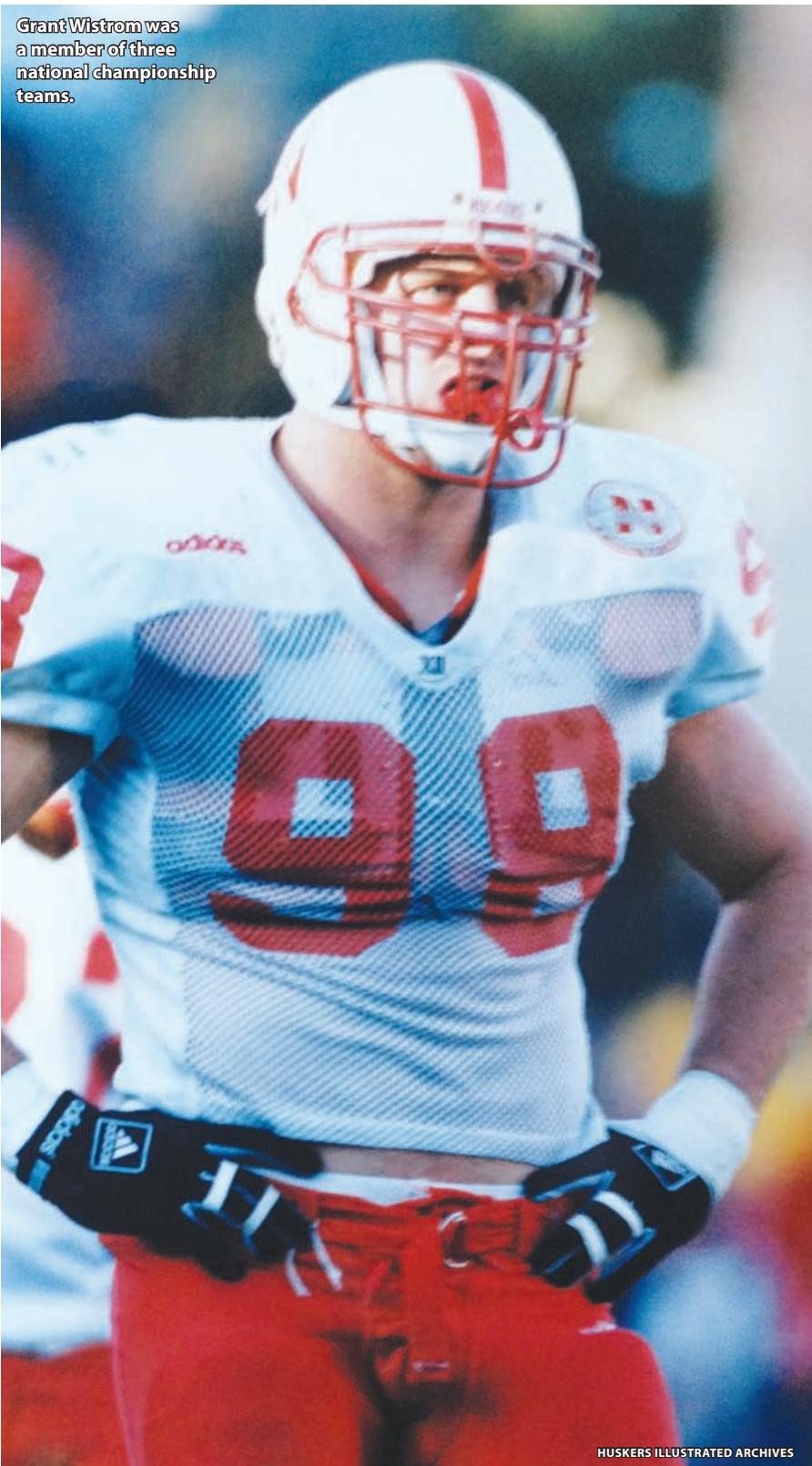
They brought the badness (and with Wistrom, at least, he gave the impression he was also bringing the goodness). He pushed, pulled, prodded, kicked, dragged, carried, bullied, willed Nebraska to greatness. Team psychologist Dr. Jack Stark has said Wistrom was the best leader he's ever been around. Never seen anything like it. There's no stat for that. Oh, except one: they're called W's.

### STEVE WARREN

*Defensive Tackle, 1996-99*

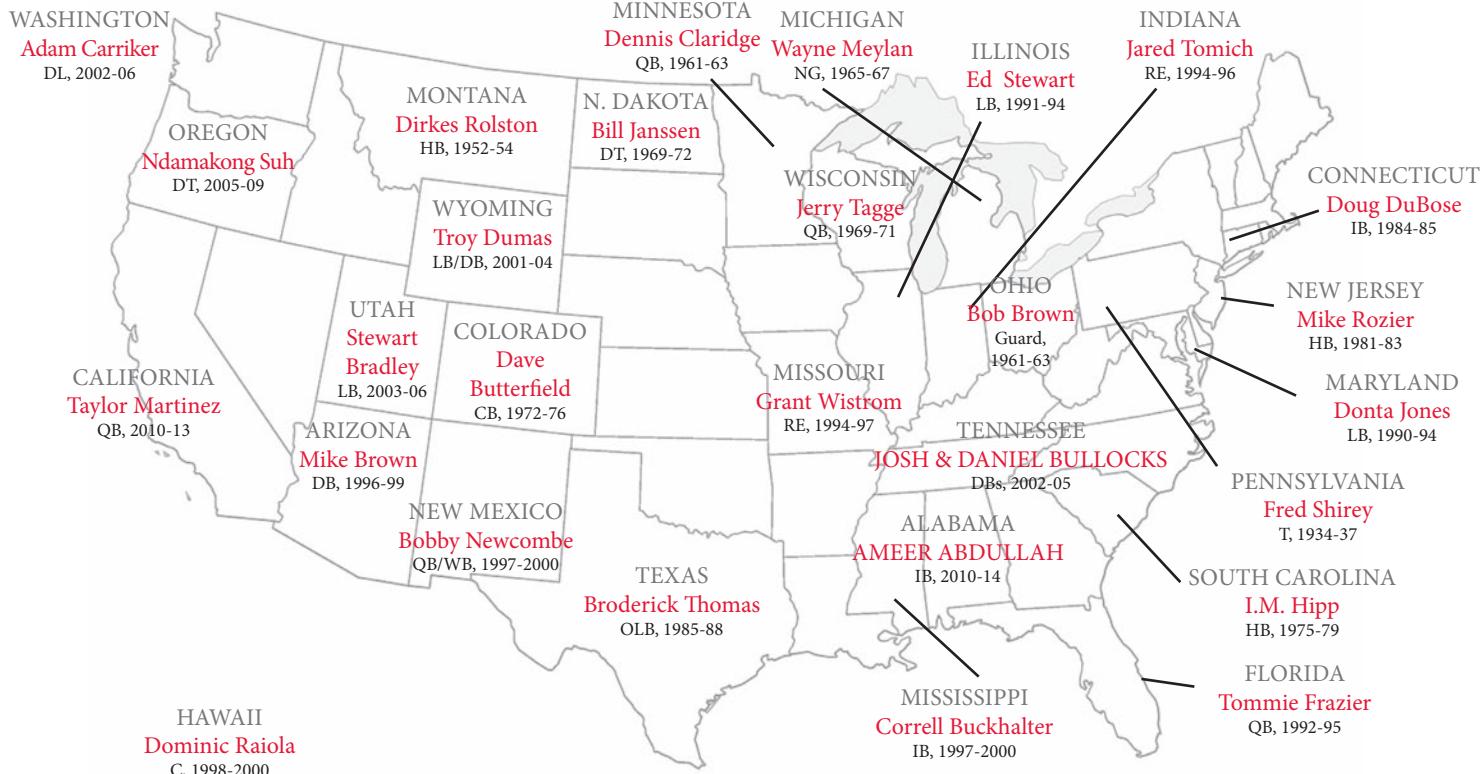
Bo Pelini would ... well, not kill. But he would do something significant to get a Steve Warren into his lineup. Warren is a rare gem. Great running backs are everywhere. Great offensive line-

Grant Wistrom was a member of three national championship teams.



HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED ARCHIVES

# All-Time Greatest Huskers From Each State



men can be made. Even great quarterbacks come along. But great defensive tackles are like Bigfoot. Every 10 years there's a sighting.

Warren was a difference-maker. If Suh hadn't come along, we'd still be talking about looking for the next Steve Warren. A great defensive tackle can make everything go. Man, as the years go by that 1999 team looks more and more special.

## Dan Schneiss

*Fullback, 1968-70*

The fullback, and captain, on that first national championship team. Hit so hard they called him "Baby Bull."

## TENNESSEE

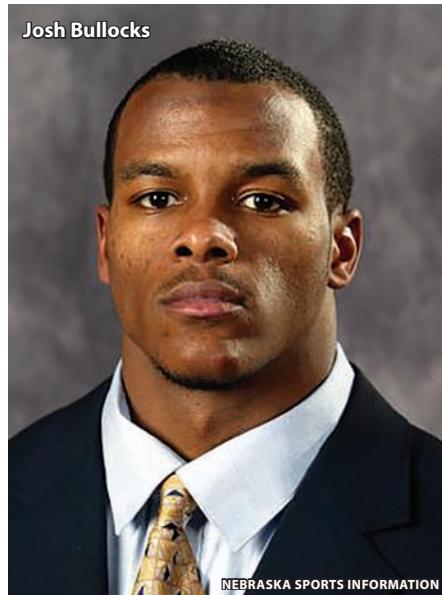
### JOSH BULLOCKS

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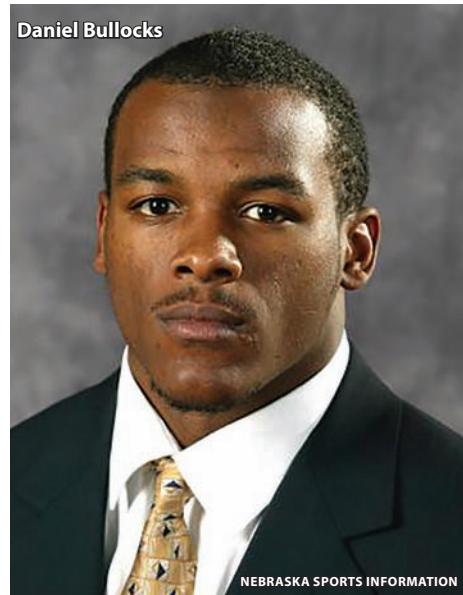
### DANIEL BULLOCKS

*Defensive Back 2002-05*

We'll call them a package deal. They were both captains. Both special teams standouts as young players. Josh was an All-American, setting conference and Husker records with



NEBRASKA SPORTS INFORMATION



NEBRASKA SPORTS INFORMATION

10 interceptions as a sophomore. The next year he didn't get as many interceptions, so the national honors weren't there, but he was first-team All-Big 12. Daniel had five interceptions that junior season, and finished with the Husker career record for passes broken

up by a safety, with 22. Together, they were something special. With his stock sky-high, Josh turned pro after his junior season. Daniel returned to serve as Nebraska's captain. For two magical seasons, they were starters in the secondary together.

# Comstock illustrates some of Cornusker greats

**By Darren Ivy**

Huskers Illustrated

Just over 30 years ago, Joe Comstock of Omaha watched in horror from his home in Omaha as Turner Gill's two-point pass attempt to Jeff Smith was knocked away by Miami defender Ken Calhoun to preserve the Hurricane's 31-30 upset of top-ranked Nebraska in the 1984 Orange Bowl.

The failed two-point conversion kept Tom Osborne from winning his first national title as a coach and Nebraska's third overall.

For Comstock, it killed his chances of a "huge" pay day on some custom illustrations he had drawn of some of the stars of that team. Approximately 1,000 copies of each 21-x-27 and 23-x-25 inch prints were scheduled to arrive from the printer a week after that national championship game.

"It would have been perfect timing had Nebraska won the game," Comstock said. "That failed two-point conversion took the fans from a eager customer to 'I don't want to be reminded of the pain right now'. I disliked Miami already due to their home field advantage in a bowl game, now I could really hate them."

Comstock's set of five "Power & Spirit of Husker Football" illustrations – Tom Osborne talking to players Turner Gill, Mike Rozier and Tim Brunhart, Turner Gill avoiding an Oklahoma rusher, Irving Fryar making a catch against Penn State, Mike Rozier running away from Missouri defenders, and Bret Clark and teammates converging on an Oklahoma State receiver, still are part of many Husker fan's memorabilia collections.

But 30 years later, Comstock still laments about what could have been had the Huskers just kicked the extra point or completed the two-point conversion.

"Everyone was just so devastated and sad after that game," recalled Comstock, who had attended Nebraska in 1978-79 and 1979-80 before transferring and graduating from Kansas. "It lasted a while."

Sales were slow after the Orange Bowl loss, but over time, when the sting of that loss lessened, the series of five prints became collectibles.

"My brother took in a bunch to the Nebraska Book Store and they asked how many we had left and he ended up selling the rest to them," Comstock said. "That Christmas, I was living out in California and he sent me this big toy airplane. I was wondering why, but then he asked if I had opened up the nose and I pulled



it off and there was a \$5,000 check in it. That was pretty cool."

Comstock, who was working as a freelance designer in Omaha 1982 and 1983, said he got the idea for the Husker illustrations because the Huskers were the pre-season No. 1 team and the excitement about the team was unreal.

"For good reason, there was a lot of excitement about Turner Gill, Mike Rozier and Irving Fryar," Comstock said.

Comstock, who now is the creative director at Omaha Public Power District, admitted that he got a little bit of a late start on his illustrations that season and wasn't as knowledgeable about the program as he should have been.

His first illustration in the series actually never was released because it had been of a group of Nebraska defenders tackling an Iowa ball carrier.

In 1982, Nebraska had defeated Iowa 42-7 culminating a four-year stretch of games with the Hawkeyes. But unbeknownst to Comstock, Iowa was not on NU's 1983 schedule, and at the time when he found out, he didn't want to include a team the Huskers weren't going to face.

"I didn't get the illustrations done until two or three games into the season," Comstock recalled.

By then things were rolling along for the Husker football team as NU had averaged more than 60 points a game in dismantling defending national champion Penn State, Wyoming and Minnesota.

Once Comstock finalized a series of five illustrations, he and some family members went around to a variety of businesses and individu-

als, pre-selling the set of five framed prints for \$250.

Being young, Joe's uncle had offered some financial assistance, so he could order 1,000 copies of each high-quality print from a printer in Kansas City.

"Things were a lot different back then," Comstock said. "It wasn't like you could do things digitally on a computer and e-mail it to a printer and have them back in a few days. It was about a two to three-week process."

While Comstock was pitching his concept, the Huskers were continuing to win and remain No. 1.

While the loss in the final game dampened some of the enthusiasm for Comstock's work, it wasn't a complete loss.

In years that followed, Comstock's prints were displayed in the background each week during the Tom Osborne Show. Another set of his prints hung in the Cornhusker Hotel while many other prints can still be found at establishments around the state.

Three of his illustrations were featured in a 1989 Lincoln Magazine article about the 100th year of Nebraska football.

Comstock still has a couple original prints hanging up in his cubicle at OPPD.

Following his experiences with marketing those prints, Comstock admitted he was a little apprehensive to try it again on as large of a scale. Plus he had moved out to California for work as a commercial artist.

However, about three years ago, Comstock decided to renew his interest in Husker artistic illustrations after being inspired by Rex Burkhead.

"There was a play against Iowa where Burkhead, carrying the ball, jumped into the air through some Hawkeye tacklers. He was like Superman." That lit the flame and Comstock made his first collectible Husker illustration in almost 30 years.

The illustration had the same appearance as the 1983 prints with Comstock's same signature black border at the top and bottom with Nebraska Football in reverse gray type.

This time around, Comstock made it a standard 18 x 24 inches so it could easily be framed. Last season, he did another illustration of Taylor Martinez and recently completed an illustration of Ameer Abdullah (pictured above).

For those interested in owning one of his prints, Comstock can be reached at jscomstock@cox.net or 402-201-5381.

## Sept. 21, 1957

Bill Jennings' debut as Nebraska's head football coach was spoiled by Washington State as quarterback Bobby Newman connected with Jack Fanning on touchdown passes of 20, 3 and 10 yards to lead the Cougars to a 34-12 victory at Lincoln. The Huskers, who were outgained 380-239 in total offense, got their lone scores on 1-yard TD runs by Roy Stinnett and Harry Tolly.

## Sept. 22, 1962

Coach Bob Devaney's first game with Nebraska produced a more successful result as the Cornhuskers rolled to a 53-0 home victory over South Dakota as eight different players scored TDs for the Huskers. In analyzing Devaney's style, the *Omaha World-Herald* wrote, "In contrast to the confusion which has appeared to keep the Cornhusker bench in turmoil during recent seasons, all was in order and businesslike. ... Devaney gave the orders and his assistants carried them out. The new coach spoke to the players as they left the field – a word of encouragement, advice or an occasional verbal whip."

## Sept. 23, 1972

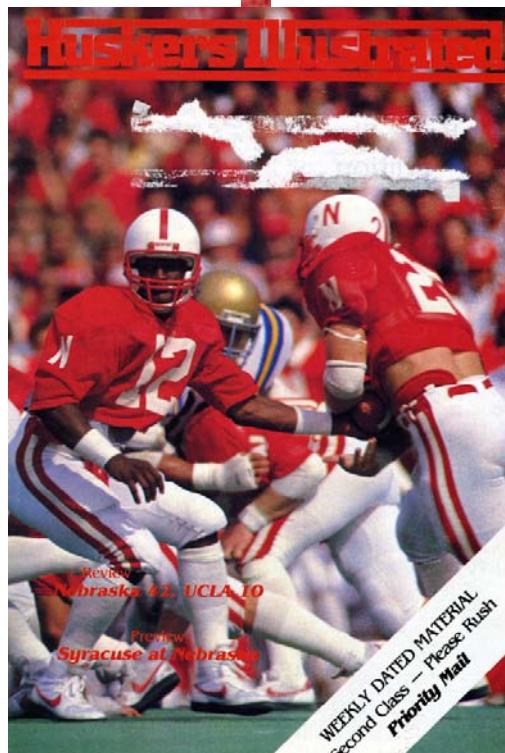
Nebraska traveled to West Point for a 77-7 victory over Army at Michie Stadium before a sellout crowd of 42,239 fans and an ABC regional TV audience. The 77 points were the most scored by any team in college football that season, despite backup players taking over midway through the third quarter. Johnny Rodgers scored three TDs to lead the Huskers, while teammates Dave Goeller and Steve Runty each crossed the goal line twice.

## Sept. 24, 1983

One week after an 84-13 victory at Minnesota, No. 1-ranked Nebraska returned home to record a 42-10 victory over UCLA (pictured above) after trailing the Bruins 10-0 early in the second quarter after a pair of lost fumbles. Many Husker fans will remember this game for a Mike Rozier third-quarter TD run – arguably the most spectacular 2-yard scoring play in college football history – as the NU I-back started by taking a pitch to his left, but then doubled all the way back to the right sideline before reaching the end zone. The eventual Heisman Trophy winner covered an estimated 80 yards on the play.

## Sept. 25, 1999

In its first trip to Columbia since pulling off "The Miracle in Missouri" thanks to Matt Davison's deflected TD reception that



led to an overtime victory in 1997, No. 5-ranked Nebraska didn't need any heroics as it posted a 40-10 victory. Quarterback Eric Crouch passed for two TDs and ran for another score as the Huskers won their 100th game of the decade – second only to Florida State. With the help of two botched punt snaps by the Tigers and an interception by linebacker Julius Jackson, Nebraska raced to a 16-0 first-quarter lead and was never threatened.

## Sept. 26, 2009

No. 25-ranked Nebraska celebrated its NCAA-record 300th consecutive home sellout in style with a 55-0 victory over Louisiana-Lafayette in front of a then-record crowd of 86,304.

Several members of the 1962 team, which started the streak under the late coaching great Bob Devaney, were in attendance as the Huskers dashed to a 34-0 halftime lead and cruised from there. Despite the blowout, a full house remained as fans were treated to a post-game fireworks display and highlights from every decade of the streak's existence.

With all the hoopla and pageantry surrounding this contest, it would've been easy for the Huskers – clad in their 1962 throwback uniforms – to forget that they actually had to play a football game. However, Nebraska coach Bo Pelini vowed Nebraska would come out and play with passion and fire and, for the most part, they did.

"We knew there would be a lot of bells and whistles and things like that," Nebraska senior center Jacob Hickman said. "Coach Bo kind of told us to ignore it, but once we got out there, (the crowd) was well over capacity and there was a little

extra excitement.

"Once we got out there, you could feel some extra energy from the fans. It kind of energized us – I definitely felt it."

## Sept. 27, 2008

Virginia Tech scored on six-consecutive possessions in the second and third quarters and then staved off Nebraska's determined comeback attempt to post a 35-30 road victory at Memorial Stadium. The Huskers trailed 28-10 late in the third quarter, but cut their deficit to 28-13 on Roy Helu Jr.'s 12-yard scoring run and Nate Swift's 88-yard punt return.

After the Hokies answered with a TD, quarterback Joe Ganz led NU on a four-play, 80-yard scoring drive that took just 56 seconds off the clock and was capped by a 17-yard TD pass to Todd Peterson with 1:32 to play.

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

The Nebraska women's basketball team's annual game with Creighton will be televised live by Fox Sports 1 this season.

The network announced it will pick up the rivalry contest on Dec. 11 in Omaha. It's an 8:00 start time.

The game will mark Nebraska's first-ever women's basketball appearance on Fox Sports 1, and it is the first nationally televised game announced for a Nebraska women's basketball game heading into the 2014-15 season. More are expected to be announced within the next week or so as part of the Big Ten's agreements with the Big Ten Network, ESPN and CBS.

Last season, Nebraska made 10 regular-season appearances on national TV, including seven on BTN, two on ESPN2 and one on the Pac-12 Network. The Huskers also added two more BTN appearances on their way to the Big Ten Tournament Championship Game, which was televised live nationally by ESPN. They then made two more appearances on ESPN2 as part of the 2014 NCAA Tournament, giving the Huskers a record 15 national TV appearances last season, including a record five on the ESPN family of networks.

## WOMEN'S SOCCER

The Nebraska soccer team (4-2-1) opened Big Ten play with a 1-1 draw against Northwestern on Thursday afternoon at the Nebraska Soccer Field.

The Husker offense applied pressure throughout the first half, taking 11 shots compared to the Wildcats' four. However, Northwestern went into locker room with a 1-0 lead after Sami Schrakamp's first goal of the season in the 12th minute. She scored from 20 yards out on the right side on a breakaway from midfield.

The Huskers continued their attack in the second half, taking eight shots to Northwestern's three, but it wasn't until the 88th minute that Nebraska scored. Caroline Flynn's cross to the middle was deflected by Jaycie Johnson over to Katie Kraeutner, who knocked it in from 20 yards out to tie the score.

The goal marked Kraeutner's second of the season. It also marked the sixth time in seven games that Nebraska has scored in the 75th minute or later.

Neither team managed a shot in the first overtime period, but Northwestern took two in the second overtime. One of those shots was saved by goalkeeper Kelly Schatz, who compiled three for the game in 110 minutes of work.

## WOMEN'S TENNIS

The Nebraska women's tennis team opened its fall season at the Racquet Club Collegiate Invitational in Midland, Texas this Friday through Sunday. The Racquet Club Invitational is an NCAA sanctioned event for men and women by invitation only. The four Huskers who made their way to Midland are juniors Maggy Lehmieke and Mackenna Maddox, sophomore Lisa Andersson and redshirt freshman Spurts Shivalingaiah.

The results of the tournament came too late to post here, but the 18 teams that have players participating in the event include Pepperdine, Wichita State, Texas State, Nebraska, Rice, New Mexico, Texas, Tulsa, Abilene Christian, Lamar, Penn State, UT-Arlington, Texas Tech, TCU, North Texas, Texas A&M, Kansas, and Baylor.

## MEN'S GOLF

Senior Josh Reinertson scorched Windsong Farm Golf Club on Monday with a 2-under-par 69 in the final round. His score was good enough to put him in a tie for 24th individually, leading

Nebraska to a 10th-place finish among the teams in the Gopher Invitational.

Reinertson, a Gibbon, Neb., native started on Hole No. 10 and recorded birdies on three of his first five holes to post a 35 on his first nine. On his second nine, he opened with six consecutive pars before posting birdies on the seventh and ninth holes with a bogey on No. 8. Reinertson finished the 54-hole tournament with a 12-over-par 225 total.

The Huskers produced a score of 303 on Monday, tying their best round of the tournament. On Sunday, NU posted 303 in the first round before shooting 305 in the second. The Huskers' 911 total for the tournament earned a tie for 10th with Notre Dame.

Senior Calvin Freeman tied for 30th with a three-round total of 14-over-par 227. Freeman made 13 pars en route to a final-round 78. Ross Dickson turned in a 5-over-par 76 on Monday, making birdie on Hole No. 8. Dickson shot 231 for the tournament to earn a tie for 45th. Fellow senior Mike Siwa finished two strokes behind Dickson at 233. Siwa made birdie on No. 11 on his way to an 83 in the final round. Sophomore Justin Jennings made birdies on Nos. 3 and 16 en route to an 80 on Monday. He finished 69th with a 243 total.

The Huskers tee it up next at the Mark Simpson Colorado Invitational, Sept. 29-30, at Colorado National Golf Club in Erie, Colo.

## WOMEN'S GOLF

Nebraska fired a final-round 290 to finish with a three-round total of 896 in third place at the Husker women's golf team's season-opening Chip-N Club Invitational on Tuesday.

Cassie Deeg led the Huskers' climb up the team leaderboard on Tuesday by carding a three-under-par 69 in the final round at Nebraska's home tournament. The junior

from Hugo, Minn., matched tournament champion Rio Watanabe from Ohio State for the day's best round, vaulting her from a tie for 15th in the individual standings to start the day, into a tie for fourth.

Teammate Jordan Chael added a final-round 74 to close her tournament as Nebraska's top finisher at 220 (71-75-74). The sophomore from Overland Park, Kan., produced a career-best third-place finish, while her 220 was also a career-best, surpassing the 224 she fired in NU's victory at last year's Chip-N Club Invite.

Chael's career performance placed her three strokes behind Ohio State's Watanabe (74-74-69-217) and two shots back of OSU's Jan Chanpalangsri (76-72-70-218).

Watanabe and Chanpalangsri fueled the Buckeyes' charge to the team title. OSU, which totaled an 879 including a tournament-best final-round 284, defeated Missouri (891) by 12 strokes.

Morgan Smejkal's three-round score of 225 (76-76-73) was a career best, while her final-round 73 was also a collegiate best for the junior from Columbus, Neb. Smejkal finished in a tie for 13th place.

Sarah Pravecek was Nebraska's No. 4 finisher in the tournament. The sophomore from Omaha, Neb., closed with a three-round score of 232 (77-79-76) in a tie for 26th.

Audry Judd, a freshman from Olathe, Kan., added a tie for 28th in her first collegiate tournament. She closed with a 233 (78-81-74) to round out the Husker lineup.

Junior Cassidy Stelzmillier tied for 33rd (80-79-75-234) as one of three Husker individuals playing outside the lineup in the tournament.

Freshman Emily Gillman tied for 35th (78-81-76-235), while sophomore Yoorm Kang tied for 45th (81-79-78-238) in the 62-player tournament field.

# Coaches Corner

*with Darin Erstad  
Head Baseball Coach*



*Huskers Illustrated reporter Lanny Holstein recently visited with Nebraska baseball coach Darin Erstad, who is entering his fourth season, to talk about his team's fall practices and Red-White series, which will be played on Oct. 19 at 6:05 p.m., Oct. 20 at 6:05 p.m. and Oct. 21 at 12:05 p.m. at Hawks Field.*

**HI:** What kind of work do you have the pitchers doing in fall ball?

**DE:** Our pitchers, we take away their breaking ball these first few weeks and make them go fastball-changeup, make them pitch to contact. You know, most of these guys have never been touched in their lives, and they have to learn how to get barreled up a few times, and see what that feels like because it's going to happen at this level.

**HI:** Do you take the breaking ball away from the older pitchers too?

**DE:** Oh yeah, everybody. One, a lot of guys have thrown a ton of innings in the summer, so we try to ease some of that stress on their arm, but really it's just getting an understanding that you can throw the ball over the plate. So many times younger guys can elevate the fastball or throw breaking balls off the plate and have 12 strikeout performances. That's awesome, but at this level people don't swing at those pitches. You need to learn to pitch competitively.

**HI:** How difficult was it to lose the leadership of a couple guys like Pat Kelly and Michael Pritchard?

**DE:** That's the fun part. Who knows who's going to step up? That's one of the things in the game we play. It's not easy and it's not hard. It's just one of the things that happen. You are going to lose guys through the draft and you are going to lose seniors. You just hope the older guys have taught the younger guys how to do it.

**HI:** How much does getting a little taste of the postseason last year build on to this year?

**DE:** I think our guys are ready for the next step. The one thing I liked about our group at the end there was that they were genuinely upset that we didn't advance any farther. It wasn't like a pat on the back getting back to regionals and being happy with that. They were mad.

**HI:** How will the offense look with new hitting coach Mike Kirby?

**DE:** Very similar to how it was with coach Bolt. We want a very aggressive style of offense. It's not going to be a station to station deal necessarily. We're not going to just bunt all the time to bunt. We want guys who can drive the baseball, and I'm really interested to see how the flat-seam baseball plays in scrimmages. I've heard of people hitting it 50 feet farther, so we'll see how that plays out.

**This Week**



**Husker Athletics**

**Friday, Sept. 19**

***Men's Tennis***

Baylor Fall Invitational at Waco, Texas

***Women's Tennis***

Missouri Invitational at Kansas City, Mo.

***Swimming***

Scarlet vs. Cream Intrasquad Meet at 4 p.m.

**Saturday, Sept. 20**

***Cross Country***

Woody Greeno at Pioneer's Park at 10 a.m.

***Volleyball***

Texas at Devaney Center at 2 p.m.

***Men's Tennis***

Baylor Fall Invitational at Waco, Texas

***Women's Tennis***

Missouri Invitational at Kansas City, Mo.

***Football***

Miami at Memorial Stadium at 7 p.m.

***Women's Soccer***

Wisconsin at Madison, Wis. at 7 p.m.

**Sunday, Sept. 21**

***Men's Tennis***

Baylor Fall Invitational at Waco, Texas

***Women's Tennis***

Missouri Invitational at Kansas City, Mo.

**Monday, Sept. 22**

***Women's Golf***

GolfWeek Conference Challenge at Vail

**Tuesday, Sept. 23**

***Women's Golf***

GolfWeek Conference Challenge at Vail

**Wednesday, Sept. 24**

***Women's Golf***

GolfWeek Conference Challenge at Vail

***Volleyball***

Iowa at Devaney Center

Nebraska sophomore golfer Sarah Pravecek waits to tee off during the Chip-N Club Invitational on Sept. 8.



# Breathing Easier

## Surgery gives sophomore golfer a new outlook on life

Story By Darren Ivy • Photos by Mitch Otto

Nebraska sophomore golfer Sarah Pravecek feels like she has a new lease on life. The sophomore from Omaha is eager to see how that translates to her golf game after struggling with breathing problems her entire life that have limited her ability to even walk a round of golf.



Nebraska sophomore golfer Sarah Pravecek talks with assistant coach Mike Schuchart during the Chip-N Club Invitational on Sept. 8.

"It's so nice," said Pravecek, who had surgery earlier this year to remove an extra membrane that had been covering half of her trachea and only allowing a fraction of the air she required to pass through. "It is a lot easier to breathe. I am hoping this year is going to be my year."

Pravecek and her teammates opened the 2014-15 season on Sept. 8-9 at the Chip-N Club Invitational at Wilderness Ridge in Lincoln.

Pravecek finished fourth on the Huskers with a three-round score of 232 (77-79-76). As a team, Nebraska came in third place.

"She has more energy," Nebraska women's golf coach Robin Krapfl noted. "She is more vibrant. She sleeps better. It is just helping in all areas of her life. Her golf game is coming on strong."

When Pravecek arrived on campus in January 2014 after transferring from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, she was not able to pass her physical due to shortness of breathe on the running portion.

NU's team doctors gave her a waiver that allowed her to compete, but continued to examine her condition further.

"We were concerned about her well being," Krapfl said. "I have to give credit to our medical staff for sticking with it. They kept eliminating what it wasn't until they finally were able to figure out what was causing it."

Pravecek said she saw three specialists before a CT scan and a bronchoscopy finally revealed the extra membrane, a condition none of her doctors had ever seen before.

Pravecek and her family had spent a good portion of her life trying to figure out why exactly she would lose her breath or struggle to breathe when she ran or exerted herself.

For years, Pravecek was told by doctors that she had asthma, but the inhalers they gave her

**Sarah Pravecek, second from right in front row, and her uncle, Gregg Barrios (striped shirt) both competed for the Huskers.**



## Pravecek's uncle Barrios kicked for NU

Gregg Barrios' football career at Nebraska was completed by the time his niece, Sarah Pravecek, was born in 1995.

Barrios, who was a standout at Creighton Prep, burst onto the scene for the Huskers in 1988 when he kicked three field goals in a 23-14 upset of No. 10 Texas A&M. His career-long 50-yard field goal in the 1989 Orange Bowl prevented the Huskers from being shut out for the first time since 1973, but No. 6 NU still fell 23-3 to No. 2 Miami.

Barrios would remain the starting kicker the next two years. He finished his career with 205 points, which ranks in the top 15 all-time for scoring at NU.

"I was told he was a really good kicker back in the day," Pravecek said. "I have see pictures of him and heard stories."

Barrios' wife, Shari, and Sarah's mom, Lisa, are sisters and both families still live in Omaha.

to use did not help her breathe easier.

"It's why I decided to give up basketball," said Pravecek, who had been a point guard for Omaha Marian. "It was hard for me to keep up with everyone."

Her condition didn't affect her as badly in golf, but Pravecek said if she was on a hillier course, she would become winded walking up and down the hills. She forged through and helped her high school golf team win state championships in 2009 and 2010. Kidney stones ended her junior season prematurely, but she returned in 2012 to win an individual state title in Class A.

"He and his wife have a big family too so we are always getting together for family things," Pravecek said.

Pravecek said she didn't get her golfing ability from her uncle, who is now a police officer for Omaha Police Department.

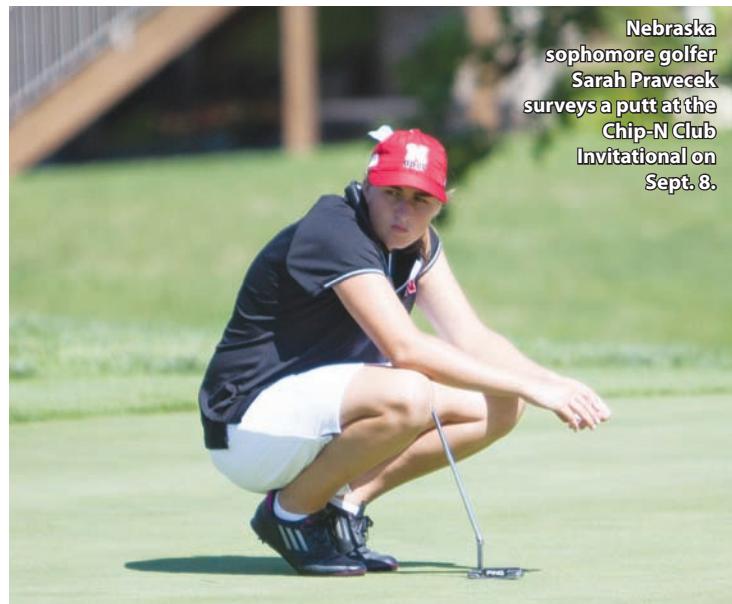
"He sometimes does some charity golf events," Pravecek said. "I definitely would beat him at golf. If it was a football contest, he would get me on the kicking part."

Barrios was excited when he heard his niece was going to be continuing the family tradition of competing for the Huskers.

"When I told him, I was transferring to Lincoln, he told me, 'You will love it there,'" Pravecek said. "That made me even more excited to come here."

As for any comparisons to her uncle, Pravecek said, "I want to make my own mark."

**Nebraska sophomore golfer Sarah Pravecek surveys a putt at the Chip-N Club Invitational on Sept. 8.**



"I loved golf too much to even think about giving it up," said Pravecek, who has been golfing since she was 9 years old.

By the time Pravecek emerged as one of the top prep players in the state, Krapfl already had filled her recruiting classes.

"I told her father her senior year if she had been played like this last summer, I could have found a spot for her," said Krapfl, who often gets verbal commitments from her players when they are underclassmen in high school.

Pravecek had always hoped to be a Husker but wasn't discouraged and opted to stay close to home and play golf at UNO.

"I decided to go there and try and do my best and prove myself and then see if a spot might open at Nebraska," Pravecek said.

She actually didn't have to wait long, as a Husker player left the program during the first semester of 2013, and Krapfl contacted her about walking on.

"I always wanted to go to UNL," said Pravecek, whose uncle, Gregg Barrios was a kicker for the Husker football team in the 1980s. "It was my dream school. It was a great trade for me to get to come here."

Pravecek represented the Huskers as an individual at one competition in Arizona last spring before she had the surgery done. This past summer was the first time in her life that Pravecek was able to walk a round of golf without getting winded. Krapfl said Pravecek is currently one of NU's top five golfers and would be competing at all the events this year.

"I am looking forward to see what happens this year," Pravecek said.

# 10 questions

## with Cassie Deeg Junior Golfer



### 1 How did you get into golf?

CD: My dad got me into it. I was in sixth grade and my older brother had just left for college, and he and my dad had always played golf together. My older sister wasn't really into it, so he came home from work one day and said "I got you a golf lesson." I was mad, but I did it and just kept going back. I was kind of forced at first, but then I kind of fell in love with it.

### 2 What are your goals this season?

CD: I just want to play my own game, not get all caught up in this and that because when I get really serious about it, I feel like I play worse. When I just kind of play my own game like I'm out with my family, that's when I play my best round. I'm working on just playing to play golf.

### 3 What are the strengths of your golf game?

CD: I would say my irons as far as physically. I have spent a lot of time practicing them and staying committed to each shot and really focusing on what I'm trying to do.

### 4 Do your parents come to Lincoln much?

CD: They don't really come here much, but they come to almost all of my tournaments, so I see them quite a bit during the season, not necessarily in Lincoln, but at the tournaments. They are coming to four of the five in the fall and almost all of them in the spring. I'm the youngest, so my dad is semi-retired and my mom is a stay-at-home mom. It's easier for them because work isn't really a huge thing right now for them."

### 5 How did the offseason go?

CD: You either go home in the summer or you stay here, but you play individually. In Minnesota, we have a bunch of tournaments, the state amateur, the state open, the state match play, state publinks. We actually have a really good program in Minnesota. Some people don't believe that because it's cold, but I mainly play in all of those and the qualifiers for the U.S. stuff too.

### 6 What is the best part of living in Lincoln?

CD: I love Lincoln. The atmosphere here and how the state is so into the university and the athletics, I just think that is so cool. The downtown area too, the Haymarket area is so cool. I went down there for dinner with my parents the other night. Everyone is just so nice here. I just love it.

### 7 What's the craziest golf shot or story you have?

CD: Last year, at our home tournament, I was tied for the lead with my roommate Steffi going into the third round, and I was playing well the last day, but I didn't really know where I stood. On the last hole, No. 18, there's water all up the right side. On my second shot, I hit a hybrid and it didn't get two feet off the ground. It hit, and it bounced over part of the hazard and luckily it just stayed up by the green. I just chipped in for birdie to end the tournament, and I ended up winning.

### 8 What's the coolest course you've ever played?

CD: We're actually going back there in two weekends. It's in Vail, and it's called red sky ranch. We went there my freshman year and we're going there again this year, which I'm really excited about. It's on the mountains, and from the front nine to the back nine, you go up like a 1,000 or 2,000 feet climbing while you are playing. It's pretty cool.

### 9 It seems like a lot of Husker golfers have come from Minnesota, right?

CD: I know Robin (Krapfl) likes to recruit from the Midwest just because of the similar weather, we are used to the cold and stuff like that. I don't know why she's sticking with Minnesota, but I know Steffi (Nieson) was from there and she's a good player, so she kind of continued it.

### 10 What will it be like to go home this week for the Minnesota Invite?

CD: It's going to be awesome. A bunch of family is coming out, and some of my coworkers and members from the course where I worked this summer are going to come out and watch as well, so it's going to be a blast.

*As interviewed by Huskers Illustrated's Lanny Holstein*

Kelsey Fien has emerged as contender for the starting outsider hitter position.



Story By Bob Hamar • Photo by Joe Mixan

# Fine Tourney for Fien

## Junior outside hitter hammers career-high 17 kills

**KELSEY FIEN CAN BRING THE HEAT. FIEN SHOWED THAT WITH A BREAKOUT WEEKEND SEPT. 5-6 AT THE DAYTON CLASSIC IN DAYTON, OHIO. THE NEBRASKA JUNIOR OUTSIDE HITTER HAD 43 KILLS IN THREE MATCHES THERE, INCLUDING A CAREER-HIGH 17 AGAINST CAL STATE BAKERSFIELD.**

Maybe that performance against Bakersfield shouldn't have been a surprise, because Fien is from Bakersfield, California

"It was exciting," Fien said. "It was also really weird at the same time because I honestly never thought that we'd actually play them, so it was nice seeing some of the girls I played club against in high school. They have a new coach

so they have some new girls I didn't recognize, but it was fun playing them."

Significant playing time was a while coming for Fien. She played in 14 matches as a freshman and 11 last year, including a then-career high 13 kills in a loss to Auburn in the opening match of the 2013 season.

Nebraska coach John Cook said the 6-foot-3 Fien always had the ability, but has at times had problems with moving on to the next play after she made a mistake. She's gotten some help with that from Nebraska sports psychologist Larry Widman.

"The big thing, with all of us, is how long do we hang onto mistakes," Cook said. "Younger players, and Kelsey is younger, she makes a mistake and it impacts the next three or four plays. Now she has learned. Dr. Widman helped her with, 'Hey it's next play. We don't let that hang on.' That's something she's learning to master."

"All players have to learn to do that because you're going to get blocked, you're going to make errors. The question is how do you handle that."

Fien is handling it pretty well now, and Dr. Widman's advice has been a part of that. She said they would meet "once in a while" to talk about things.

"It's very helpful," Fien said. "It's made my game a lot better. I get past mistakes. I don't hold anything. It can be something as simple as taking a deep breath. It works for me, but it can be different for every athlete."

Whatever Fien did in Dayton, Cook hopes she keeps doing it.

The other outside hitter spot opposite of Kadie Rolfzen has been up for grabs.

Cook saw what Fien could do when the Huskers traveled to China and Japan in June.

"I saw (at Dayton) what I saw in China," Cook said. "Kelsey can take over a match attacking when she's good. She was really consistent (at Dayton). She just had one little spurt where she was high error. Other than that, she was a dominating attacker. She was bringing it."

Fien, certainly brought it as a high schooler at Frontier High.

She was the first player in school history to record 1,000 career kills and was a 2011 Volleyball Magazine Fab 50 selection.

Fien picked Nebraska not just for volleyball but for football and academics too.

"I wanted to go to a school that had a football program so I could enjoy the games," Fien said. "Then also with my major (diversified ag), agriculture is huge for me so Nebraska was a good fit."

But moving up to the college level on the volleyball court wasn't easy.

It took a while for her to adjust to play at a Division I powerhouse.

Now that adjustment appears to be complete.

"If you had seen the way I played my freshman year compared to now, there is a vast jump," Fien said. "My freshman year I would take it on to the next point, next point, next point. Now I've learned a few techniques. I get over it. You can't change the past."

## 2014 Nebraska Volleyball Schedule

Aug. 23, 2014	Red-White Game	Devaney Center	White 3-1
AVCA Showcase			
Aug. 29, 2014	Florida State	Devaney Center	L, 3-1 (0-1)
Aug. 31, 2014	Stanford	Devaney Center	L, 3-0 (0-2)
Flyer-Raider Invite			
Sept. 5, 2014	Dayton	Dayton, Ohio	W, 3-0 (1-2)
Sept. 6, 2014	CSU-Bakersfield	Dayton, Ohio	W, 3-1 (2-2)
Sept. 6, 2014	Eastern Kentucky	Dayton, Ohio	W, 3-0 (3-2)
Ameritas Players	Challenge		
Sept. 12, 2014	Denver	Devaney Center	W, 3-0 (4-2)
Sept. 13, 2014	Colgate	Devaney Center	W, 3-0 (5-2)
Sept. 17, 2014	Creighton	Devaney Center	7 p.m.
Sept. 20, 2014	Texas	Devaney Center	TBA
Sept. 24, 2014	Iowa *	Devaney Center	TBA
Sept. 27, 2014	Iowa *	Iowa City, Iowa	TBA
Oct. 3, 2014	Penn State *	Devaney Center	TBA
Oct. 4, 2014	Ohio State *	Devaney Center	TBA
Oct. 10, 2014	Michigan State *	East Lansing, MI	TBA
Oct. 11, 2014	Michigan *	Ann Arbor, MI	TBA
Oct. 15, 2014	Northwestern *	Devaney Center	TBA
Oct. 18, 2014	Illinois *	Devaney Center	TBA
Oct. 22, 2014	Minnesota *	Minneapolis	TBA
Oct. 26, 2014	Wisconsin *	Madison, Wis.	TBA
Oct. 31, 2014	Rutgers *	Piscataway, N.J.	TBA
Nov. 1, 2014	Maryland *	College Park, Md.	TBA
Nov. 5, 2014	Purdue *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 8, 2014	Indiana *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 12, 2014	Michigan State *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 16, 2014	Maryland *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 19, 2014	Indiana *	Bloomington, Ind.	TBA
Nov. 22, 2014	Michigan *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 26, 2014	Illinois *	Champaign, Ill.	TBA
Nov. 29, 2014	Penn State *	State College	TBA
NCAA Tourney			
Dec. 4-6, 2014	TBD	College Sites	TBA
Dec. 13-14, 2014	TBD	Regional Sites	TBA
Dec. 18, 2014	TBD - Semifinals	Oklahoma City, OK	TBA
Dec. 20, 2014	Championship	Oklahoma City	6:35 p.m.

## Kelsey Fien By the Numbers

**17** Career-high kills against Cal-State-Bakersfield.

**25** Matches appeared in prior to her junior season.

# NEBRASKA VOLLEYBALL NOTEBOOK

Compiled by Bob Hamar • Photo by Joe Mixan

## TOUGH ROAD AHEAD IN COMING SEASONS

The Huskers will face some tough early season competition for at least the next four seasons.

Nebraska will be in a four-team tournament along with national powers Texas, Oregon and Florida each of the next four years. The location will rotate among those four schools. Next year is at Texas with Nebraska to host the fourth year.

"We're excited," Cook said. "We like going to Texas. We want to recruit Texas so it's important for us to go down there. We're excited to go to Oregon and see their facilities. (Oregon offensive coordinator) Scott Frost is a buddy of mine."

The Huskers started this season with losses to No. 13 Florida State and then-No. 3 Stanford. The Cardinal moved up to No. 1 in the AVCA ratings Sept. 8 after beating Penn State the proceeding weekend.

"This year, I don't know if it was good for us or not," Cook said of the tough schedule. "But I think we have to play those levels of teams so we know going into the Big Ten what we have to do. (At the Dayton tournament) we could beat those teams because we were just better than them, but we have to play teams that are better than us so we understand what we need to do going into the Big Ten."

## TOUGH CONDITIONS IN DAYTON

Cook and Fien both talked about the tough playing conditions at the Dayton tournament.

"It was a memorable weekend in that I've never been to the University of Dayton before, and they play in a very small, hot gym," Cook said. "We really had to kind of show some mental toughness and resolve to play in those conditions."

"It had to be at least a 100 degrees in that gym. But anyway, we took care



Middle blockers Melanie Keil, Cecilia Hall and Kira Larson pose for a photograph before the season.

of business and played some good volleyball."

Cook said the conditions were so bad that it was really impossible to play high-level volleyball. Fien said it was so hot and sticky that the floor was hard to slide on. If you fell, you would just stick right there.

"It was really hot," Fien said. "You could walk in the gym and feel the stickiness. You didn't even have to move and you were already sweating. When we got warmed up, there were some girls changing their shirts. We had towels on the bench ready to go. It was probably one of the worst circumstances I've played under."

## A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE?

Cook said the Huskers played bet-

ter and better at the Dayton tournament each match. It culminated with a dominating 25-12, 25-23, 25-7 victory over Eastern Kentucky.

Cook hopes he saw a glimpse of the future in that match.

"Eastern Kentucky game three, we were a machine," Cook said. "I saw what I think we can become. Now, can we do that against Stanford? That's what we have to get to. You could feel it. You could see it. There was no hesitation. They were getting after it, playing like I envisioned them playing."

Fien said the Huskers just did what they are supposed to do.

"We played Nebraska volleyball," Fien said. "It's everything from technique, passing, blocking, hitting."

## AVOIDING FOOTBALL CONFLICTS

The Huskers will avoid playing at the same time as the football team as much as possible. If they have a home match, they will hold off scheduling the time until they know when the football game will be played that day.

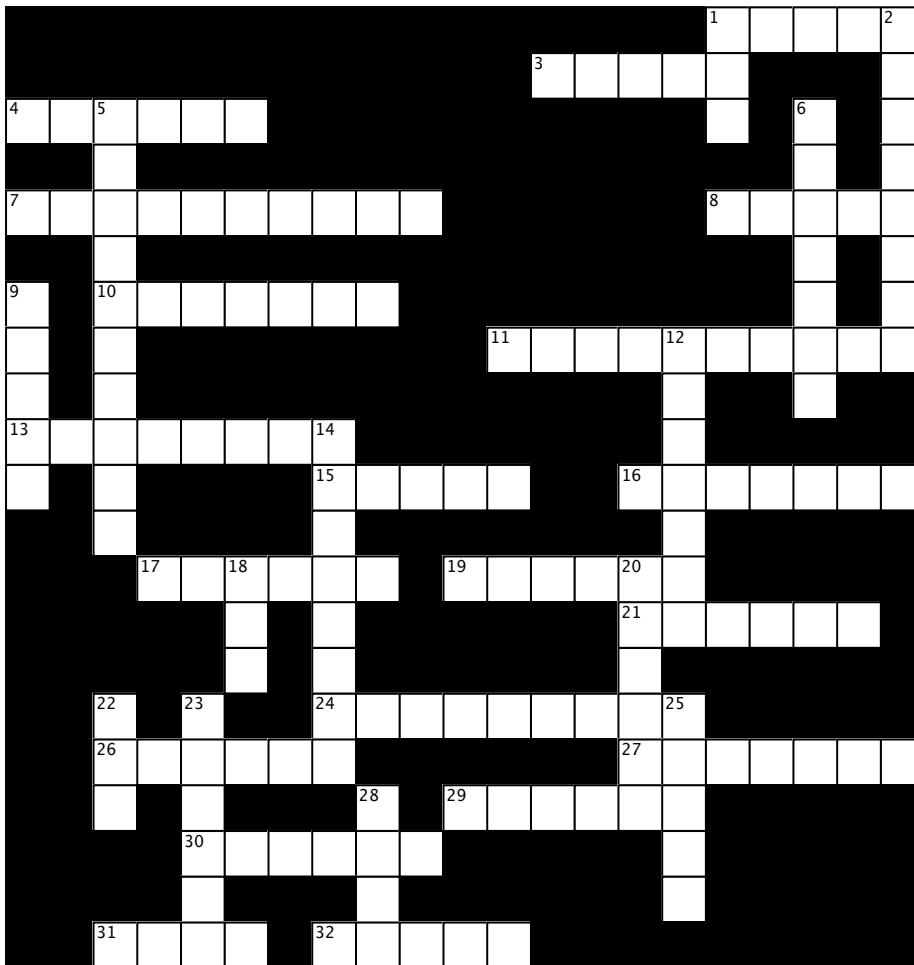
When they are on the road, they don't have much choice. They pretty much have to play when the home team wants to play.

Quite often, that home team schedules with no regard to the football program. Cook doesn't understand that philosophy.

"We have some conflicts in the Big Ten and we've asked to move and the Big Ten teams don't want to move," he said. "I always try to help our fans out so they can try and experience both, but not every school gets that. It just blows my mind that the volleyball program doesn't care about going head-to-head with their football program whether they're at home or on the road."

"We know there are a lot of fans that do both. We are always looking at that so everybody can do everything."

# SEPTEMBER 20 CROSSWORD PUZZLE



**- ACROSS**

1. Kickoff specialist
  3. Wears No. 74 (offense)
  4. Associate head coach
  7. Leading receiver vs. McNeese State
  8. Wears No. 7 (offense)
  10. 1993 Butkus Award winner
  11. Miami nickname
  13. Miami Heisman Trophy winner (1992)
  15. Ex-Husker kicker now with New York Giants
  16. 1997 Lombardi Award winner
  17. Wears No. 57 (offense)
  19. 2016 non-conference opponent
  21. Ex-Husker center now with Detroit Lions
  24. Leading rusher vs. McNeese State
  26. NU's 3rd Heisman Trophy winner
  27. Imani Cross's home state
  29. Suffered season-ending injury vs. McNeese State
  30. Head strength coach
  31. Former Husker quarterback now a graduate assistant
  32. 2011 All-America linebacker

DOWN

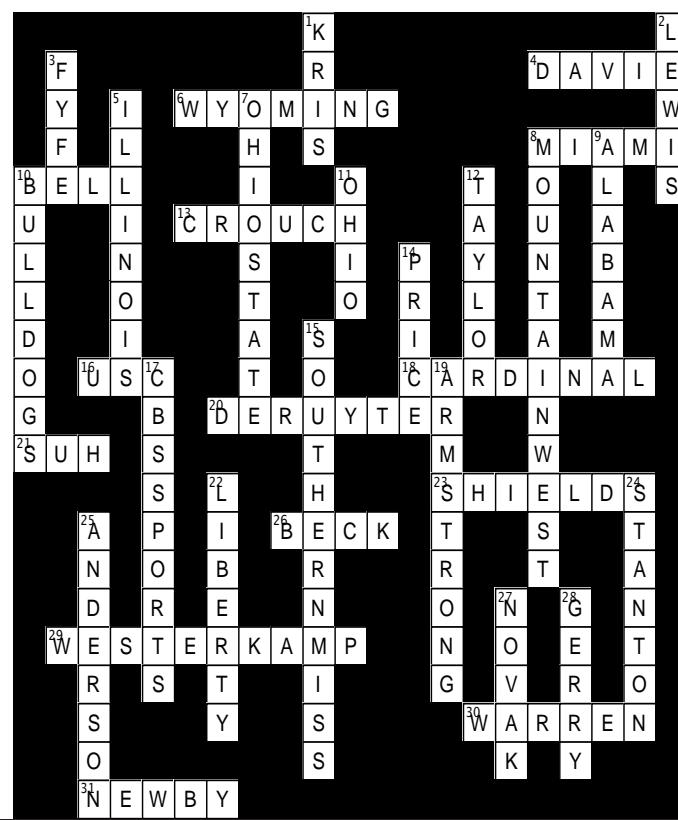
1. 2015 non-conference opponent
  2. Sept. 27 opponent
  5. Miami Heisman Trophy winner (1986)
  6. Wears No. 7 (defense)
  9. Big Ten Special Teams Player of the Week for week 2
  12. Randy Gregory's home state
  14. Scored winning touchdown vs. McNeese State
  18. Recruiting coordinator
  20. Miami school color
  22. Miami's conference
  23. Miami head coach
  25. Leading tackler vs. McNeese State
  28. Nov. 28 opponent

# Prognostications of Joe Husker



The once category 5 Hurricanes  
barely register now. Huskers  
knock the wind out of Miami.

SEPTEMBER 13 CROSSWORD SOLUTION



THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

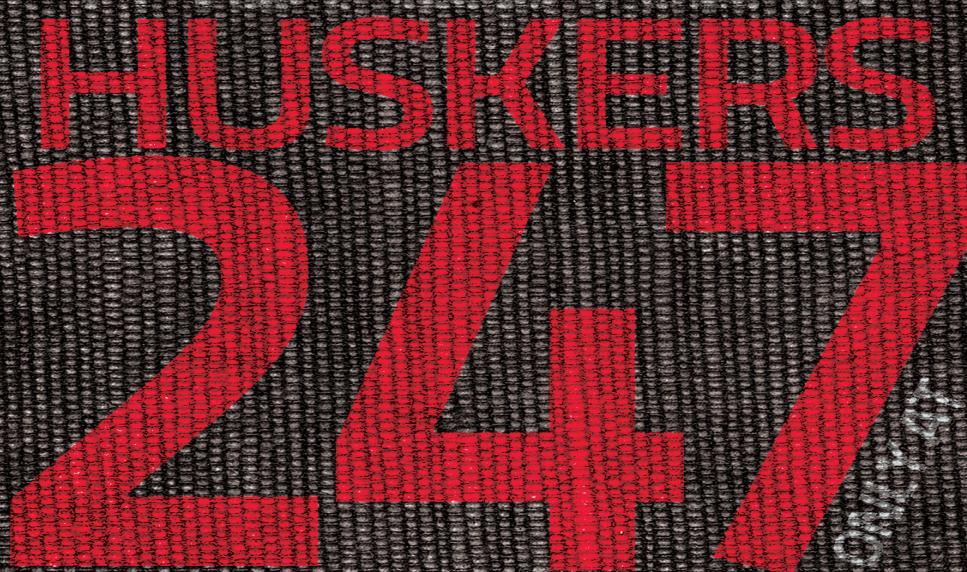
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